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Writing Africa, Writing Canada: Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in the Work of Margaret Laurence

by

Laura Katherine Strong Davis

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Abstract

This thesis understands Margaret Laurence's developing anti-imperialist and feminist ideologies by examining how they intersect with one another in both Africa and Canada. It situates Laurence's anti-imperialist and feminist beliefs within theory regarding Western constructions of Africa, and specifically looks at how such Western constructions of Africa are outlined and critiqued by theorists such as V.Y. Mudimbe, Kwame Anthony Appiah, and Anne McClintock. This thesis delineates how Laurence confronts Africa as she confronts a personal and collective history, and in the case of her memoir, how she seeks to understand Africa as she seeks to understand herself as a constructed feminine subject. Regarding Laurence's Canadian work, this thesis demonstrates how the Canadian works of fiction express Laurence's unease with the continual subordination of First Nations and Métis. Laurence's Canadian works of fiction reveal her nationalist belief that Canada should distinguish itself from Britain and the practice of British cultural traditions. Laurence's feminist alignment with the politics of first-wave feminists such as Nellie McClung, the thesis argues, cannot be reconciled with her opposition to the oppression of the indigenous and Métis in Canada.

Chapter one outlines the methodology for the thesis, while chapters two and three analyze Laurence's African novel, *This Side Jordan* (1960), her African memoir, *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (1963), and her collection of African short stories, *The Tomorrow-Tamer* (1963). These chapters demonstrate how Laurence is both caught within a history of Western feminism that denigrates the African woman, and yet aligned with African "womanists," such as Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi, who are as concerned with race as they are with gender. Chapter four considers Laurence's *The Diviners* (1974) in relation to emerging multiculturalism in Canada, the new open-door immigration policy, and the impending Canadian constitution. Chapter five considers Laurence's collection of political and travel essays, *Heart of a Stranger* (1976), and her correspondence with Imperial Oil in 1974. Essentially, the thesis argues that Laurence occupies a fraught subject position as an anti-imperialist who is often aligned with a history of imperial practices both in Africa and in Canada.

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Introduction

Margaret Laurence has long been known as a prominent figure in Canadian literature. Kristjana Gunnars calls her "a founding mother of Canadian literature" (viii); William New states that "more than any other writer of her time," Laurence "seemed to have mastered the rhythms and cadences of the Canadian speaking voice" (1); and Christian Riegel suggests that "Margaret Laurence touched Canadians like no other writer during her career. A nerve was struck in the Canadian psyche" (xi). Laurence's success in speaking of and for Canadians, especially in her Canadian fiction, has often been discussed in Laurence scholarship. Laurence's African and Canadian writing, however, may also be read as anti-imperialist and feminist. Reading Laurence's work as such offers an opportunity to understand Laurence as a specifically political writer and as a writer whose work demands to be read in relation to the milieu within which it was produced.

Laurence and her husband, Jack, lived in the British Somaliland Protectorate (later to become Somalia) from 1951 to 1952, and in the Gold Coast (later to become Ghana) from 1952 to 1957. It was Laurence's husband's work as an engineer that brought her to Africa: Jack was hired by the British government to construct reservoirs, or *ballehs,* in Somaliland, and to build the new port of Tema in the Gold Coast. Somewhat ironically, while Jack worked for the British colonial government, Margaret began to write books about Africa that clearly expressed her beliefs against imperialism and patriarchy. As is evident from the inclusion of three essays about Africa in her 1976 collection of travel essays, *Heart of a Stranger*, and in her life-long admiration and friendship with African writers Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka, Margaret Laurence's intellectual and literary interest in Africa continued throughout her life.

This dissertation considers three of Laurence's five books about Africa: *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (1963), a travel memoir set in Somaliland; *This Side Jordan* (1960), a novel set in Ghana; and *The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories* (1963), a collection of short stories also set in Ghana. Laurence's other two books about Africa include *A Tree for Poverty* (1954), a collection of Somali poems and stories, translated and interpreted by Laurence; and *Long Drums and Cannons: Nigerian Dramatists and Novelists, 1952-1966* (1966), a book of criticism on Nigerian writers. These important books are a testament to Laurence's commitment to language, culture, and literature in Somaliland, where she resided, and in Nigeria, which she researched. In this dissertation, however, I focus solely on the African memoir and the African fiction because they most explicitly foreground Laurence's fraught subject position in Africa as an anti-imperialist and feminist who is problematically implicated in a Western colonial and patriarchal regime.

Laurence's politics in Africa involved resisting the cultural domination of African peoples and aligning herself in her writing with such Africans as Mensah, whom she discusses in "The Very Best Intentions," an essay in her essay collection *Heart of a Stranger* (1976), and who was against both imperialism and the Nkrumah[1] regime in Ghana. As Nora Foster Stovel points out in her introduction to the 2003 edition of *Heart of a Stranger*, Laurence "made her sympathy with Ghana's independence movement clear in her choice of the mammy-lorry slogans—'The Day Will Come,' 'Authority Is Never Loved,' and 'Rise Up, Ghana'—as epigraphs for *This Side Jordan*" (xvii). Much of *This Side Jordan* and *The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories*, in fact, is about the Gold Coast's impending freedom from Britain, and in these texts, Laurence implicitly proclaims herself an anti-imperialist. While at times Laurence seems optimistic about Ghana's freedom from Britain, she also demonstrates her wariness regarding ongoing Western economic interest in and exploitation of Africa. Such wariness of imminent corruption is subtly invoked, for example, in Matthew's comment in "The Drummer of All the World" (in *The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories*), that "Independence is the new fetish, and political parties the new chieftains" (17). It is also invoked in Laurence's mention, in "The Very Best Intentions," of Mensah's statement that he is pleased with independence "but would be even more pleased if [he] did not see quite such a large hotel being built by the government for visiting important personages" (28).

In her African memoir, *A Prophet's Camel Bell*, Laurence states, "my feeling about imperialism was very simple—I was against it" (25). Furthermore, before publishing her African memoir, Laurence wrote to her friend C.J. Martin, in 1962, asking him if she could use some of his photographs from their time in Africa. In that letter she describes the focus of her memoir as anti-imperialist:

> If [the memoir] attempts to show anything, it is that communication between peoples of different cultures is not a simple matter and that goodwill is not enough—there must ultimately be some kind of inner consent, the acceptance of other people as they are, in terms of their own concepts, not one's own, and the growing realization that neither side, as it were, has the right to impose its ideas on the other. This, in essence, is my point of view.

Throughout this dissertation, I argue that Laurence understood imperialism not only as the occupation of foreign land—as the sun that never sets on the British Empire—but also as an insidious system of ongoing economic and cultural exploitation that affects the minds of the colonizers and the colonized alike.

Critics began to discuss Laurence's African writing as early as 1966, but focused not on Laurence's critique of imperialism or patriarchy, but on how her African writing compares to her emerging Canadian work. S.E. Read's 1966 article, "The Maze of Life: The Work of Margaret Laurence," for instance, implies quite explicitly that the African novels are second-rate compared to the Manawaka ones (40), and George Woodcock's 1970 article, "Jungle and Prairie," finds the individual stories in *The Tomorrow-Tamer* successful but believes that the collection as a whole, unlike the Canadian collection of short stories, *A Bird in the House*, is not. Even Laurence herself, in her 1969 essay, "Ten Years' Sentences," denigrates her African work. She says that she now finds *This Side Jordan* "out-dated and superficial," and yet she also describes it as "retrospectively touching" (29-30). Laurence criticism in the 1970s and 1980s begins to discuss how Laurence's Manawaka novels were influenced by her experiences in Africa. Referring to her translations of Somali poems and tales in *A Tree for Poverty,* William New maintains that Laurence came to understand cultural differences by articulating them in local languages. With this knowledge, Laurence could return to Canada and speak of cultural differences there "in a language which (like that of African writers) bore some relation with the local social experience" (4). Likewise, Craig Tapping in 1988 argues that Laurence's experiences in Africa allowed her to view Canada in colonial terms, and that she was able to re-define her Canadian experiences in terms of what she learned abroad (65).

In the introduction to his 1997 book, *Challenging Territory: the Writing of Margaret Laurence*, Christian Riegel notes that, "In the contemporary context, [Laurence's] early work takes on a new importance as Canadians begin to come to terms with the postcolonial condition" (xiv). Certainly, recent Laurence criticism suggests a resurgence of interest in her African writing. Fiona Sparrow's 1995 study, *Into Africa with Margaret Laurence*, is the first full-length study to address Laurence's African writing alone. Nora Foster Stovel's recent editions of *Long Drums and Cannons* (2001) and *Heart of a Stranger* (2003), like Sparrow's book, attest to the contemporary interest in Laurence's early writing. However, critics have not paid enough attention to how Laurence's anti-imperialist beliefs are manifested in her African work. Likewise, while Laurence scholarship has addressed the author's feminist beliefs in the Manawaka series, they have not thoroughly done so with regard to her early writing. Wendy Roy's important 2001 article is a start, for it directly discusses Laurence's anti-imperialist and feminist beliefs in Africa, but to date there has not been a full-length study on the subject. My contention is that the discourses of postcolonialism and feminism concern Laurence's African writing, and that these discourses intersect and overlap in ways that scholars have not yet drawn out. The representations of Africa and Africans in Laurence's writing, I argue, are at once informed by and resist imperialist and patriarchal discourses and the ideologies embedded within them.

In the *Heart of a Stranger* essay entitled "A Place to Stand On," Laurence speaks about how she felt a need to leave the subject of Africa, and to begin writing about

Canada. "I always knew that one day I would have to stop writing about Africa," she states, "and go back to my own people, my own place of belonging" (6). In that same essay, she traces her genealogical roots back to the Scots-Presbyterian pioneers in Manitoba, and says of them, "This is where my own roots began" (6). Importantly, however, in the introduction to "Man of Our People," another *Heart of a Stranger* essay, Laurence explains how the history of the "prairie Indian and Métis peoples in the 1800's is one that has long concerned and troubled" her (*Heart*, 161). On the one hand, Laurence expresses her stance against the history of Native dispossession in Canada; on the other hand, she traces her "roots" to those very pioneers who did the dispossessing. As I have mentioned, Laurence begins to write against Western imperialism and patriarchy in Africa even as she is implicated in those very systems by virtue of the fact that she is in Africa as the wife of an engineer hired by the British colonial government. In the same way, Laurence expresses concern for the "tragic" (161) history of the prairie Indian and Métis, even as she is implicated in that history by virtue of the fact that her ancestors were Scots-Presbyterian pioneers who may have exploited Native peoples. Laurence's attempt "to come to terms with the past" (*Heart,* 8) is an attempt not only to understand her own people, but, also, somewhat problematically, an attempt to reconcile a troubled and ongoing settler-Native conflict.

Margaret Laurence's corpus of Canadian work is impressive. She not only wrote five books about the fictional prairie town of Manawaka, known as the Manawaka series, but she also wrote three children's books, and, at the end of her life, she composed a memoir entitled *Dance on the Earth* (1989). This dissertation considers only one of the books in the Manawaka series, *The Diviners* (1974). The last, and, as Laurence's publisher, Jack McClelland notes, the "most ambitious" (185) novel of the series, *The Diviners* is particularly relevant to the subject of my study. It directly engages with the history of Western Canada's beginnings and addresses the conflict between the Scots-Presbyterian pioneers and the Métis people. Moreover, the novel is decidedly feminist. The main character of the novel, Morag Gunn, is situated as a housewife who breaks free from an oppressive marital relationship to become an independent woman. Allegorically, Morag Gunn represents Canada, which breaks free from imperial Britain to become its own nation. Laurence's feminism and anti-imperialism in *The Diviners* is not surprising, given that the novel was written during the second-wave of feminism in Canada and during a time when Canada was attempting to define itself as a nation apart from Britain and British cultural traditions. I interrogate how Laurence problematically attempts to reconcile setter-Métis relations and imagine an independent Canadian nation. I also interrogate how Laurence draws upon the interconnectedness of imperialism and patriarchy in order to contest those very systems.

Laurence's politics in Canada involved resisting the ongoing oppression of indigenous peoples and women. She resisted such oppression not only through her writing, but also through her work, late in her life, for associations such as "Women for Peace" and the "Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL)." Laurence contributed money to publisher Mel Hurtig's Committee for an Independent Canada, demonstrating her stance that Canada should break free from its British and colonial past. Likewise, Laurence was involved in and helped to sponsor the Public Petroleum Association of Canada, demonstrating her stance against the exploitation of Canada's natural resources by large multi-national companies such as Imperial Oil. As Thomas

M.F. Gerry puts it in his essay, "In Cases of Emergency: the Political Writing" (1997), during the late 1970s and early 1980s, Laurence "had the unmitigated gall to write didactically about political issues, about women's struggle for equality, about nuclear disarmament, about living in harmony with the environment" (214). Laurence's involvement in such organizations and concern with such issues are anti-imperialist and feminist: she works against the domination of peoples and the patriarchal governments that perpetuate such domination. This dissertation takes into account Laurence's political practices and understands Laurence's developing anti-imperialist and feminist ideologies by examining how they intersect with one another in Canada.

Recent Laurence scholarship has delineated a relationship between Laurence's African and Canadian writing. In "Regionalism, Nationalism and Internationalism in Margaret Laurence" (1996) for instance, Toshiko Tsutsumi argues that Laurence's experiences in Africa prepared the way for Laurence to understand emerging nationalism in Canada "characterized by such key words as 'mosaic,' 'ethnicity,' and 'multiculturalism'" (310). Gunilla Florby's study, *The Margin Speaks: A Study of Margaret Laurence and Robert Kroetsch from a Post-Colonial Point of View* (1997) acknowledges, although it does not thoroughly analyze, the connections and disjunctions between the colonial situations in Africa and Canada in relation to Laurence's Manawaka novels. And in "The Face of Africa: Laurence's Portraits of Self and Other in *The Prophet's Camel Bell* and *This Side Jordan*" (2005), Nora Foster Stovel states that Laurence's "experience of living in Africa led her to perceive Canada as a postcolonial nation" (1).

Some of the criticism of *The Diviners* concentrates on Laurence's feminist stance. Meira Cook's article, "Becoming the Mother: Constructions of the Maternal in *The Diviners*" (1997), reads the novel in relation to Julia Kristeva's notion that no signifier can fully represent the maternal body. Such a reading is particularly relevant to Laurence's text, since Laurence contests stereotypes of the mother through the main character in her novel, Morag Gunn. Christian Bok's article, "Sibyls: Echoes of French Feminism in *The Diviners* and *Lady Oracle*" (1988) focuses on the work of Luce Irigaray and Helene Cixous, and argues that Morag Gunn, a fictional writer, experiences writing as a particularly feminine, visionary experience. In an interview published in *Chatelaine* magazine in 1971, Laurence resists aligning herself with the feminist movement. "The reason why I don't take part [in the feminist movement]," she asserts, "is not because I disagree with the aims, but because my way of dealing with it is not protest or propaganda" (quoted in Gerry 216). Clearly, however, Laurence's feminism is evident in her work, and, indeed, in an interview with Bernice Lever in 1977, she states that her political work "resides in [her] fiction" (23).

A few articles address postcolonialism in Laurence's Canadian work. Such is the case, for example, in Neil ten Kortenaar's "The Trick of Divining a Postcolonial Canadian Identity: Margaret Laurence Between Race and Nation" (1996), and in Karen E. Beeler's "Ethnic Dominance and Difference: The Post-Colonial Condition in Margaret Laurence's *The Stone Angel, A Jest of God,* and *The Diviners*" (1998). No critic, however, has looked at how the discourses of postcolonialism and feminism inform Laurence's work together—how these discourses intersect in complicated ways. And certainly, no critic has created a full-length study that tackles this subject in relation to both Laurence's African and Canadian work.

The first chapter of this dissertation, "Margaret Laurence's Writing in Theoretical Context," outlines the methodology for the study. I discuss imperialism in relation to theories put forth by historians Nuper Chadhuri and Margaret Strobel and postcolonial theorists Simon Gikandi and Edward Said. Drawing upon postcolonial and feminist theorists such as Anne McClintock, I also discuss how imperialism and patriarchy are intimately intertwined. In addition, the chapter outlines Western ideas of Africa and how they inform Laurence's writing. V.Y. Mudimbe's *The Idea of Africa* (1994) and *The Invention of Africa* (1988), as well as Anthony Kwame Appiah's *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (1992), are particularly important in this regard. Finally, I discuss the complex issue of feminism and Laurence's work. Laurence was, perhaps, more influenced by first-wave feminists such as Nellie McClung, feminists that fought for equality in education and the vote, than she was by second-wave feminists of the 1960s, who fought for work outside of the home. While Laurence's work is clearly in line with certain feminist principles, it is disjunct from African women's concerns as set forth by writers such as Buchi Emecheta and Omolara Ogundipe-Leslie. Drawing out the intricacies of the discourses that inform Laurence's work offers an opportunity to understand Laurence's uneasy relationship with Western imperialism and patriarchy. This chapter argues that, in order to understand Laurence's work, we must examine it in relation to the cultural milieu that encases it.

The second chapter of this dissertation, "Margaret Laurence in Africa: Conflicts of Culture and Gender in the *Prophet's Camel Bell* and *This Side Jordan*," discusses how

Laurence identifies with and dissociates herself from English colonialists and Somali women in *The Prophet's Camel Bell* and how she is caught up in imperialist discourses and attempts to counteract them in *This Side Jordan*. I argue that her stance as a Canadian and her alignment with the Scots-Presbyterian settlers who were dispossessed from their own homeland separate her from the British imperialists she encounters in Somaliland. At the same time, I contend, her perception of Somaliland is often one that repeats the Western trope of Africa as a pre-developed garden of Eden. Laurence's encounters with Somali women are particularly intriguing, since she cannot reconcile her position as liberal do-gooder with her position as feminist who cannot condone the Somali women's situations. In *This Side Jordan*, the author reveals her disdain for British imperialists, even as she employs imperialist tropes and Western ideas of Africa in her depiction of Ghana and Ghanaians alike. Laurence problematically associates the maternal, the familial, and the domestic with the African landscape. Moreover, through the British colonialist character of Johnnie Kestoe, she configures and yet critiques the idea that the African woman, like the African landscape, is in need of taming and yet empty, void. In both *The Prophet's Camel Bell* and *This Side Jordan*, Laurence's position as a Westerner who seeks to resist Western and patriarchal values is profoundly ambivalent.

The third chapter, "Towards Cross-Cultural Understanding: Margaret Laurence's Africa in *The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories*," examines how Laurence's African stories work toward cross-cultural understanding during a time of decolonization in Ghana and increasing global development there. As Nora Foster Stovel points out, Chinua Achebe said that, "in his view, no one who was not an African had written [about

Africa] with the perceptivity and sensitivity of Margaret Laurence" ("Talking Drums," ix). I focus on three stories in *The Tomorrow-Tamer* collection: "The Pure Diamond Man," "The Drummer of All the World," and "The Rain Child." In "The Pure Diamond Man," Laurence works against the idea, put forth by early explorers such as Richard Burton, that the West is "rational" and "civilized," as opposed to an Africa that is supposedly "irrational" and "uncivilized." In "The Drummer of All the World," Laurence critiques colonial intervention in Ghana and economic intervention at the time of decolonization. She also delineates a kind of Western nostalgia for an idea of Africa that was supposedly lost after colonialism. In "The Rain Child," Laurence depicts the fraught subject position of an English school teacher in Ghana. Much like Laurence herself, the school teacher, Violet Nedden, is caught up in imperial and patriarchal values even as she tries to resist them. Laurence's African short stories do not simply posit Western imperialist values against traditional African ones, but rather relay a complex and dynamic relationship between them. Despite the primarily male characters in *The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories,* the text, I maintain, is undoubtedly both anti-imperialist and feminist.

The fourth chapter, "Narrating the Canadian Nation: Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners*," considers Laurence's Canadian writing in the context of an emerging Canadian nationalism. I examine Laurence's desire to bring together those "two streams of heritage"—the Anglo-Scots and Métis—of which Jack McClelland speaks in a letter to her, and I consider Laurence's strong sense of Canada as a nation that should separate itself from the practice of British cultural traditions and establish an independent national identity. I theorize Morag Gunn's romantic relationship with Brooke Skelton as a postcolonial allegory for Canada's relationship with Britain, and I delineate how Laurence draws attention to the intertwining of imperialism and patriarchy. With reference to the historical figure of Catherine Parr Traill, whom Laurence invokes throughout *The Diviners,* I interrogate how Canadian nationalism is problematically embedded within imperialist ideology. Importantly, Parr Traill is not only a feminist, but also a nationalist and an imperialist. Laurence's Canadian writing, and particularly *The Diviners*, I argue, imagines a united nation that works towards cross-cultural understanding and equality. In so doing, it is implicated in imperialist aims, even as it ostensibly contests them. As Laurence works toward a united nation, however, she does so by displacing the simple notion that Canada is a sum total of different cultures. She reconceives Canada as a mosaic that is in flux and that is constituted through continually changing social relations.

The fifth and final chapter, "He Who Pays the Piper Calls the Tune: Laurence's Politics in the Essays of *Heart of a Stranger* and in her Correspondence with Imperial Oil," takes up Laurence's political work towards anti-imperialism and feminism abroad and in Canada. This chapter takes into consideration the fact that Laurence was and is a major Canadian literary icon, figuring prominently in the literary scene, as well as in mainstream media. The first part of this chapter considers Laurence's political beliefs as set forth in her collection of travel essays, *Heart of a Stranger*. In these essays, Laurence explicitly states her opposition to imperialism and patriarchy. The second part of this chapter considers Laurence's politics against multi-national companies as exemplified in her correspondence with Imperial Oil in 1974. As the archival letters that are the subject of my analysis reveal, because of her stance against the company's exploitation of natural resources, Laurence refused to write a script for a television series that was to be funded by Imperial Oil. Placing the correspondence between Laurence and Imperial Oil within the context of the OPEC crisis that was taking place at the time, and within the context of Imperial Oil's practice of exploiting Canadian resources and peoples, I argue that Laurence has the agency to resist such imperial practices. A discussion of Laurence's essays in *Heart of a Stranger* offers an understanding of Laurence's work as explicitly political. A discussion of Laurence's correspondence with the multi-national company Imperial Oil offers an opportunity to understand Laurence as a figure who anticipates globalization and the ways in which Western corporations, rather than nations, engage in imperialist agendas, exploiting lands and peoples in the name of economic gain.

This dissertation understands Laurence's writing in relation to the simultaneous decolonization and development that was occurring in Somaliland and the Gold Coast while Laurence resided there and in relation to the ongoing oppression of indigenous people in Canada and the emerging feminist movement there. I regard Laurence's writing with an eye to contemporary theories that enable us to know how Laurence worked within and against existing ideologies and discourses. Laurence's anti-imperialist and feminist beliefs often conflicted, and her writing does not depict her political beliefs in an easy or uncomplicated way. Historical circumstances generated dynamic responses to imperialism and feminism, responses that were specific to Africa, about which she was writing in the 1950s and 1960s, and Canada, about which she was writing later in her writing career, during the seventies and eighties. Contemporary postcolonial and feminist theories give us the tools and the vocabulary necessary to understand Laurence's work as politically forceful. Postcolonial theorists such as Edward Said, Africanists such as

Anthony Kwame Appiah, and feminists such as Anne McClintock explain how Westerners and those colonized by Westerners are caught up in imperial ideologies, even in attempts to resist them. In order to understand Laurence's subject position, I argue, we must regard her as a Westerner who simultaneously embodies and resists Western ideologies.

Yet if I am to assert that Laurence is a Canadian who simultaneously repeats and resists imperial ideologies, then I must recognize that I too am caught up in such ideologies. As an English-Canadian who resides in a primarily English-Canadian community, I am not exempt from the Western imperial values of which I am a part. Further, as one who writes a dissertation within the context of an English Department in a Canadian university, I necessarily work from within an Anglicized culture. It is my contention, however, that in order to achieve cross-cultural understanding, Western people must join in the struggle against imperialism and patriarchy. While knowing the English-Canadian context out of which my own writing comes, I can still work towards an understanding of how the discourses of anti-imperialism and feminism circulate in Laurence's work. Ultimately, my dissertation seeks to demonstrate how Laurence herself was shaped by such discourses and herself contributed to the shaping of them.

Chapter One

Margaret Laurence's Writing in Theoretical Context

In order to understand Margaret Laurence's work, we must know the historical and theoretical context that informs it. In this chapter, I address that context by drawing out the complexities of Western imperialism and patriarchy during Laurence's time and today. Taking Laurence's statement—"My feeling about imperialism was very simple—I was against it" (*Prophet's*, 25)—as a starting point, I examine the ways in which imperialism is understood by historians Nuper Chadhur and Margaret Strobel and postcolonial theorists Simon Gikandi and Edward Said. Considering Anne McClintock's important study, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (1993), I also delineate how the discourses of imperialism and patriarchy are intricately intertwined. In addition, this chapter examines how Laurence is both influenced by and contests Western ideas of Africa as set forth by theorists such as V.Y. Mudimbe and Anthony Kwame Appiah. Conceptions of Africa as empty, a pristine garden of Eden, and as wild, that which needs to be tamed, have a long history and continue in movements such as Pan-Africanism and negritude. I look at how these ideas of Africa are maintained by scholars such as Alexander Crummell and W.E.B. Du Bois; I demonstrate how rooted these ideas are; and I consider how Laurence attempts, but does not entirely succeed, in uprooting them.

The histories and theories regarding feminism, of course, are as complex as those regarding postcolonialism. This chapter therefore examines first-wave feminism as it manifested itself in Canada and abroad. As will become clear, first-wave feminism was at one with imperialism, as British feminists during colonialism considered themselves superior to the Indian and African woman. For this reason, many African women who fight for equality have termed themselves "womanists," a name that rejects an alignment with Western or imperial aims. In Canada, first-wave feminists fought for the vote for women at the expense of ethnic minorities and First Nations. Laurence is influenced by this feminism even as she strongly advocates multiculturalism and First Nations' rights. Laurence is also a Canadian nationalist and was part of the rising Canadian nationalism of the 1960s. While Laurence is well aware of her subject-position as a descendent of white settlers who dispossessed Native peoples, she still contends that we must pay heed to the intertwining history of settlers and First Nations. She believes that we must end the domination of Native peoples by settler-descendents.

Margaret Laurence, Anti-Imperialism, and Feminism

I employ the term "imperialism" according to Nuper Chadhuri's and Margaret Strobel's definition of it in *Western Women and Imperialism* (1992). For those historians, imperialism is understood as the relationship of dominance and subordination between nations. Imperialism, then, is ever-present today. Colonialism, by contrast, is a specific, historical manifestation of imperialism, such as the British colonization of Africa during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when Britain occupied particular countries and exerted military and economic control over them. This distinction between imperialism and colonialism is important to my study for two reasons. First, Britain was pulling out of Somalia and Ghana, and colonialism was coming to an end during the 1950s and 1960s, when Laurence lived in and wrote about Africa; however, imperialism continued as the West began to develop such countries and exert economic control over them. Laurence takes up the history of colonialism and also addresses the ongoing presence of imperialism in her African writing. Thus, when discussing Laurence's anti-imperialist work in Africa, it is important to distinguish between colonialism and imperialism. Second, early settlement and colonization of indigenous peoples had ended when Laurence was writing about Canada in the 1960s and 1970s; however, imperialist practices toward the indigenous continued in the form of residential schooling, the removal of indigenous children from their families, and ongoing land claims. Laurence addresses the history of colonization of the indigenous in Canada when she takes up figures such as Gabriel Dumont and Louis Riel in "Man of Our People," an essay in *Heart of a Stranger* (1976). She also addresses the ongoing imperialist practices toward the indigenous with her creation of Métis characters in her Canadian writing. Thus, just as it is important to distinguish between colonialism and imperialism when discussing Laurence's African writing, so too is it important to distinguish between colonialism and imperialism when discussing her Canadian work.

My understanding of imperialism is informed not only by Chadhuri and Strobel, but also by theorists such as Simon Gikandi and Edward Said. Gikandi's conception of imperialism is similar to Chadhuri's and Strobel's in that Gikandi views imperialism as ongoing. Gikandi argues that the term "postcolonial" is dangerous because it implies that imperialism has ended. For him, the colonialism of the past both extends into the present day as imperialism and exists in varying, even quite different, forms. Edward Said also suggests that imperialism is ongoing. He distinguishes between the kind of colonialism that was prevalent in the nineteenth century, when countries like Britain and France lived in and occupied the colonies, and contemporary American imperialism, which he suggests is less direct, but equally insidious.

Laurence developed her stance against imperialism without access to scholarly theories such as those of Chadhuri, Strobel, Gikandi and Said. As Nora Foster Stovel points out in the introduction to the new edition of *Long Drums and Cannons* (2003), Laurence's full-length study of Nigerian writers, that study is valuable "as an historical document chronicling the perspective of a Western woman writer long before post-colonial studies became current" (L). Indeed, when Laurence was writing *Long Drums,* the term "postcolonial" had not yet entered the current lexicon. Laurence read and admired O. Mannoni's *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* (1950), but Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks,* which argues against Mannoni, was not available until the 1960s.[2] Pivotal works such as Edward Said's *Orientalism* would not be available until the late seventies. Despite the lack of materials on the subject, however, Laurence's writing engages in the debate against imperialism, countering existing narratives written by imperialists such as Henry Morton Stanley, David Livingstone, and Richard Burton.[3] Laurence does not consistently use the word "imperialism" to describe historical and contemporary situations that involve the domination and subordination of peoples. Following such theorists as Chadhuri, Strobel, Gikandi, and Said, however, I employ the term to encompass the various instances of domination and subordination of peoples with which Laurence was concerned.

Laurence was concerned with the domination and exploitation of peoples in Africa by direct colonialist intervention. In her African novel, *This Side Jordan* (1960), for example, she delineates and critiques the British government and the posting of European personnel to governmental positions. In that novel and in her short story entitled "The Pure Diamond Man," she also shows how the British began to dominate

Ghana culturally, appropriating their art and selling it in local markets. Laurence is also against the kind of imperialism that continues beyond the attainment of independence for African countries. In her short story entitled "Mask of Beaten Gold" (1963), which is not included in *The Tomorrow-Tamer* collection, she criticizes the placement of an Ashanti mask in a London museum. She further comments upon the ongoing economic development of African countries post-independence, especially in her discussion of Mensah in the *Heart of a Stranger* essay, "The Very Best Intentions." Moreover, she is against the kind of imperialism that manifests itself in Canada: the ongoing domination of First Nations, and the exploitation of peoples and natural resources by multi-national companies such as Imperial Oil. Put simply, Laurence is against systematic control over peoples and believes strongly in attaining cross-cultural communication and understanding.

Like her strong belief in anti-imperialism, Laurence's strong belief in feminism is apparent in her African and her Canadian writing. I understand the term "feminism" in this study as that which works against the domination and subordination of women. Just as imperialism is a system of domination and subordination between peoples that manifests itself differently according to historical period and geographical context, so patriarchy is a system of domination and subordination of women that manifests itself differently in relation to particular contexts. In her discussion of the treasure map in Henry Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), Anne McClintock explains how imperialism and patriarchy are indeed inseparable. According to McClintock, the conquest of the foreign land on the map is also the conquest of woman: "The map [...] is a rough sketch of the ground the white men must cross in order to secure the riches of the diamond mines. On the other hand, if the map is inverted, it reveals at once the diagram of a female body" (3). Most interestingly, on the map, the diamonds are hidden in a forbidden passage which is "'the mouth of treasure cave'—the vaginal entrance into which the men are led by the black mother, Gagool" (3). The map is at once the foreign land and the woman that white man must conquer; the map exemplifies at once the white man's economic exploitation of the diamonds and his sexual exploitation of woman. The power of the African and the power of woman are simultaneously subdued as both become embodied in the mother Gagool, who enables the exploitation itself. The white man, in his imperialist exploration, defines himself as powerful conqueror in opposition to the subdued African and woman. Clearly, then, the ideologies of imperialism and patriarchy come together as the mapmaker-explorer emerges as all-powerful man.

The ideologies of imperialism and patriarchy interconnect in Western discourse, as McClintock demonstrates in her analysis of Haggard's map. As Laurence resists imperialism in her writing, then, she necessarily resists patriarchy. In *This Side Jordan* (1960) and "The Drummer of All the World" (1960), Laurence employs and critiques the trope of land as woman in the characters of Emerald and Afua respectively. In *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (1963), Laurence addresses various moments during which her anti-imperialist beliefs are informed or impeded by her feminist ones. Importantly, the public perception of Laurence as an anti-imperialist has much to do with the fact that she is a woman. She is perceived as feminine, gentle, and close to the earth and its people. Addressing these issues in Laurence's texts, I contend that Laurence's anti-imperialism and feminism must be examined together and in relation to one another, since those two political projects are intimately intertwined.

Margaret Laurence, Africa, and the Garden of Eden Narrative

In *Tensions of Empire* (1997), Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler explain how Britain imagines and tells the history of the Industrial Revolution in terms of the garden of Eden narrative. In addition, Cooper and Stoler explain how that historical moment is intimately tied to Britain's actions in the colonies. During the Industrial Revolution, Cooper and Stoler argue, the English perceived nature as that which was being lost; at the same time, the English perceived culture as the machines, mines and mills that were continually encroaching on the country and ousting nature. In this view, nature is that garden of Eden that is prior to culture and technology. It is that which is past, idealized, and can no longer be reclaimed. It is no surprise, Cooper and Stoler point out, that, during this time, Britain was not only going through the Industrial Revolution, but was also colonizing Africa. Although nature was lost in the service of technology, it could be redeemed in the kingdom of Africa. Africa was that garden of Eden to which humans could hope to return.

Like Cooper and Stoler, Donna Haraway, in *Primate Visions*: *Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (1989), relays how the garden of Eden myth plays into the construction and idealization of nature in Western histories. Whereas Cooper and Stoler speak of that myth in relation to the Industrial Revolution, Haraway speaks of it in relation to post World-War-Two primatology. She asserts that underlying ape studies "is the simple, enduring Western question: what would it be like not to be barred from nature? Is touch possible?" (132). Just as Cooper and Stoler suggest that, during the Industrial Revolution, there was a desire on the part of the English to go back in time to an idealized nature, Haraway suggests that, after World-War-Two, there was a

Western desire to go back to nature, primates in Africa, in order to re-connect with an idyllic past. At the historical moment when the West is expanding and developing in science and technology, it imagines a recreation of the garden of Eden, a reclosing of the broken globe. At the historical moment when the West feels threatened by the possibility that humans could destroy the earth with nuclear war, it desires a movement back in time to an imagined nature or garden of Eden with which it hopes to bond.

It is particularly noteworthy that the Western desire to go back to "man's" origins, to reconnect with the nature with which he imagined himself as one, is repeated in the discourse of psychoanalysis. On the one hand, according to Jacques Lacan's analysis of the psychology of early childhood development, the boy-child sees itself in a mirror and views his reflection as a totality. The child's body progresses from an "uncoordinated aggregate, a series of parts, zones, organs, sensations, needs, and impulses" (Grosz *Jacques Lacan,* 33), to a perception of its body as a totality. This perception of the self is a *future* and fictional or imagined image of the self as a whole and complete body. On the other hand, paradoxically, in order to become whole, the child must separate his self from his body. He becomes a thinking rather than a bodily being, and his self is conceptually severed from his fragmented body, never to become one again. This fragmented body is a *past* and real or physical body from which this new self is severed. It is a body that is likened to the pre-Oedipal mother for whom the child longs. Thus, the child at once looks forward in time to the self as a whole and complete being and looks back in time to the fragmented body which was at one with the mother and with whom he can never reunite.

Anne McClintock explains that, in colonial discourse, "the movement forward in space is backward in time" (10). According to Western teleology, humans move forward "from slouching deprivation to erect, enlightened reason" (9). Yet the West progresses geographically into new and foreign lands as it simultaneously moves backward in time "from white, male adulthood to a primordial, black degeneracy usually incarnated in women" (9). Along the same lines as McClintock, Haraway also explains that, in Western teleology, there is a movement both forward and backward. Primate studies are coded with a desire to communicate with the ape that represents "man's" past and with the practice of sending apes—as "man's" surrogate—into outer space, into "man's" future. That the studies reveal a desire to communicate with one's past indicates a desire to go back in time to one's imagined origins. There is a desire, as Haraway puts it, to escape from earth's gravity "into a purely abstract space" (136).

There are striking similarities, then, between the language of Judeo-Christian mythology, the language of colonialism, and the language of psychoanalysis. In the language of Judeo-Christian mythology, "man" is expelled from the garden of Eden—that which is both an idyllic past and Mother Earth. He longs to return. In the language of colonialism, "man's" progress leads to a destruction of nature and the possibility that he may destroy himself. He longs to return to the nature that was his past, a nature that is re-figured in colonies in Africa. In the language of psychoanalysis, the boy-child is severed from his fragmented body and his mother with whom he was once joined. In all of these narratives, there is a simultaneous desire to progress forward and to move backward to the past. The impetus is to become whole again. By highlighting the parallels between these discourses, I do not wish to suggest that the Biblical narrative is essentially the same as the colonial one or that the colonial one is the same as the psychoanalytic one. These languages are not directly analogous to one another. Rather, they are intricately interwoven. Western imaginings, stories, and histories have patterns that are not dissimilar to one another. Themes and patterns emerge in these stories and repeat themselves, even if in different and varying ways. Perhaps most interestingly, gender keeps coming up, if subtly, in these narratives: in the myth of the garden of Eden, woman expels man from nature, with which she is also associated;[4] in colonial discourse, Africa and the natural landscape that Western man desires are configured as feminine; and, in psychoanalysis, the fragmented body from which the boy-child dissociates himself and for which he longs is feminine, since it is likened to the body of the mother. Man abjects the feminine, separating himself from it in order to become a self, even as he longs to return to that which is simultaneously woman, the body, the past, and nature.

Laurence's work is clearly caught up in the ideas Cooper, Stoler, and Haraway delineate. Near the beginning of *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, for instance, Laurence states that she and Jack travel to Africa "to simplify, to return to the pioneer's uncomplicated struggle" (11). Laurence thus echoes the notion that Africa is a pristine or untouched garden or oasis. She and Jack long to return to it. Moreover, in her discussion of Somali hunting practices, also in *A Prophet's Camel Bell*, Laurence says that she can not understand the Somalis' torment of a cheetah before it is put to death: "I thought they were cruel to want to prolong its agony" (147). While such a statement inadvertently reinscribes the African as savage, it also presents Laurence herself, as a woman, as more sensitive to nature, closer to the African landscape and animals than are her male counterparts. Laurence is unlike the Western man, who is barred from nature and aligned with technology and scientific advancement, and who, in Lacanian terms, is separated not only from the woman and mother, but also from mother-earth. By contrast, the Western woman, here embodied by Laurence, is perceived as closer to nature, gentler and kinder to its inhabitants, and not at all separate from mother-earth.

Western Ideas of Africa, Whiteness, and Feminisms: the African Writing in Context

Essential to this study is an analysis of how discussions of Africa are often caught up in imperialist discourse, even as they might purport to be anti-imperial. Also essential to this study is an understanding of how feminist discussions are often problematically caught up in imperial and patriarchal aims, even as they attempt to resist them. If we consider how we cannot talk about Africa without invoking imperialist discourse and how we cannot talk about feminism without invoking how its history is caught up in imperialism, then we may come to understand Laurence's fraught subject-position as an anti-imperialist who is still informed by a history and continuation of Western and imperial ideologies. Let us examine, then, the ways in which ideas of Africa and the history of Western feminism are not separable from imperialist ideologies.

The idea of Africa as a Western epistemological construct goes back to the beginning of European contact with Africa in the 1500s. Western ideas of Africa continue even in attempts to refute them. Such is the case in the Pan-Africanist movement, which maintains that Africans can be unified and identified together, rather than separately, according to region or tribe. In *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Cutlure* (1992), Anthony Kwame Appiah takes up and criticizes the movement of Pan-Africanism, emphasizing that the representation or idea of "Africa" is caught up in racist ideas. Pan-Africanism, he explains, began with Alexander Crummell (1819-1898) and continued with W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963) who laid the intellectual foundations for the movement. According to Crummell and Du Bois, Pan-Africanism was important because it could unify Africans by positing race as a basis for moral solidarity. However, Crummell's and Du Bois's theories were largely based on Western assumptions and biases. Although Crummell had high hopes for Africa, he still viewed it as "heathen" and "savage," and he ultimately believed that African religions should give way to Christianity. While Du Bois also wanted to improve Africa, he embraced European and Christian ideologies and believed that every race has a purpose that derives from (a Christian) God. Cummell's and DuBois' focus on Christianity in Africa relates to this study of Laurence's work, since Laurence draws upon Christian values and employs Christian references, even as she counteracts Western influences in Africa. In the same vein, the Pan-Africanist notion of Africa as unified relates to this study, since that notion emerges in Laurence's African texts. In *This Side Jordan*, to name just one example, the English characters repeatedly define the African characters as if they are indistinguishable, as if they come from the same locale and have had the same history. Through such characters, Laurence critiques the racism implicit in the Pan-Africanist idea that Africa is one.

As Crummell's and Du Bois's Pan-Africanism invokes "race" as a basis for moral solidarity, it draws upon the doctrine of "racialism"—the idea that a race possesses inherited characteristics that are specific to that race. That doctrine is a Western concept based on rising scientific and Enlightenment theories and Darwinian methods of classification. Clearly, then, Crummell's and Du Bois's Pan-Africanist ideas not only elide the diverse cultures and languages of the African continent, but they also reinforce a Western epistemological conception of Africa.

Unlike Crummell's and Du Bois's notion of Pan-Africanism, which began the Pan-African movement that continues today, Senghor's notion of "negritude" sought not only to unify Africans, but also to celebrate being African.[5] While Pan-Africanism and negritude are similar in that they both "begin with the assumption of the racial solidarity of the Negro" (Appiah 6), they are different in that negritude more explicitly attempts to define, value, and celebrate an "African" identity. It seeks to free blackness from the pathological space given it in Christian discourse. Laurence's work, then, is implicitly informed not only by the history of Pan-Africanism, which incorporates Christianity into it, but also by the history of negritude. In her African writing, Laurence seeks to free her African characters from the pathological space given them by Christian values, even as she herself holds Christian values. Geographically, Pan-Africanism originated in the continent of Africa, while negritude began in France. As Manthia Diawara explains, the term "negritude" was coined by Aime Cesaire in the 1930s, and it was tied to a literary movement in Paris. The Pan-Africanist movement constructs Africa from within various locales in that continent; and likewise, Laurence, in her Canadian writing, constructs settler-Métis relationships in Canada from within Canada. Negritude, by contrast, constructs Africa from outside of that continent; in the same way, Laurence, in her African writing, constructs Africa from an outside perspective. As we have seen, however, whether or not ideas of Africa are constructed from within the continent or from without, imperialist notions are still present, suggesting, perhaps, the ubiquitous and insidious character of such values.

Problematically, negritude, like Pan-Africanism, is entangled within imperial ideas and European philosophies at the same time that it seeks to resist them. Senghor sought to valorize African art and gain Europe's respect for it; yet he still equated Africa with a primitive and less advanced Europe. His conception of negritude therefore suggests both that he inadvertently subjugates the African to the European gaze and that he is caught within what Mudimbe calls "the illusion of development"—the idea that the West is progressive and modern in opposition to a primitive and uncivilized Africa. Furthermore, as Appiah explains, in today's European art market, the European buyer of African art is at the center, whereas the African artist and his art are both marginalized and commodified. Appiah's point is particularly relevant to Laurence's *This Side Jordan*, where the English character of Miranda naively admires African art, attempting to value it, while not acknowledging that she enacts the subjugation and commodification of African cultures by doing so. Moreover, Appiah's point reveals how such subjugation of African cultures to the European gaze, particularly in the case of "neotraditional" art produced by Africans for the European market, continues today. The fact that this art is named the "neotraditional"—that which reinforces and maintains the past—exemplifies how Africa is still deemed ahistorical and pre-developed in juxtaposition with the so-called progressive West. It is essential, then, to highlight how Africa might be constructed both in Laurence's writing and beyond.

Just as movements such as Pan-Africanism and negritude simultaneously resist imperialism while exemplifying imperial values, so too does Laurence's African writing. In Laurence's African memoir, *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, for example, as we will see in chapter two of this dissertation, Laurence explicitly declares herself an anti-imperialist, even as she does not escape the role of "memsahib" and even though she is in Africa as the wife of an engineer hired to participate in an imperial project—the Western development of the Gold Coast. Much of Laurence's African novel, *This Side Jordan,* discusses the struggle between the old and the new; the traditional, African ways and the modern, Western ones; an "underdeveloped" Africa struggling against a "civilized" and "developed" West. Just as Crummell believes that African religions should give way to Christianity, Laurence, at least to some extent, believes in Western progress. Just as Senghor and the movement of negritude were caught up in the notion that Africa—as one—is ahistorical and pre-developed, so Laurence was entangled with such Western ideas. Africanist philosophers such as Appiah, philosophers who expose how Western values are embedded within Pan-Africanism and negritude, offer an opportunity to view Laurence's anti-imperialism in a new way. Laurence is not simply sympathetic to colonized Africans; rather, she is an anti-imperialist Westerner who is simultaneously entangled within imperialist values and discourses.

The discourses of imperialism and patriarchy, as well as Western ideas of Africa, are necessarily caught up in discourses on race. Whiteness, especially in *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, often informs and affects encounters between Laurence and the Somali people. In his book entitled *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race* (1995), Robert J.C. Young explains that ideas about race in Victorian anthropology centered around two antithetical positions: the "progressivist," Enlightenment view and the "degenerationist" view. The "progressivist view" asserted "that men had gradually evolved from a savage state into a civilized one"; the "degenerationist view" derived from the Bible and asserted "that man had been originally created as white and civilized, but had in certain circumstances since degenerated into savagery" (46-7). Here and later in his book, Young also refers to two other prevalent and opposing theories in the early and mid-nineteenth century: "monogenesis" and "polygenesis." Whereas monogenesists believed that "human races were descended from a single source, as is suggested in the Biblical account," polygenecists believed that "different races were in fact different species, and had been different all along" (101). Monogenecists explained racial difference through reference to the thesis of degeneration; polygenecists explained racial difference through reference to the idea of different "species." Monogenecists could be progressivists or degenerationists. Whether they believed in the movement toward the apogee of civilized man or in the fall from it, they still maintained that "the pure origin of man was the white male—that universal mean and measure of all things" (101). Polygenecists could also be progressivists or degenerationists. As progressivists, they could claim that "while primitive races had remained static since their creation, civilized ones had progressed" (47); as degenerationsists, they could claim that inter-racial sex could cause degeneration, since they believed that different races were different species and therefore should not mix.

What is clear from Young's account of ideas concerning race during the nineteenth century—and what is indeed one of the main points of Young's book—is that these theories of race centered around sex. What are the results of sexual relationships between races? Do sexual relations between races result in the degeneration of those races? Is it possible for sexual relations between races to result in the progression of certain races? To what race do the offspring of such sexual relations belong? These were the questions with which progressivists and degenerationists, mongenecists and polygenecists alike were concerned. In Young's words, "The dispute over hybridity [...] put the question of inter-racial sex at the heart of Victorian race theory" (102). Moreover, for all of these racial theories of the Victorian period, inter-racial sex was deemed transgressive, even dangerous. For them, implicit within the idea of inter-racial sex was the fear of degeneration. Some even questioned whether the offspring of such unions would be fertile at all. Thus, couched within such racial theories was not only a fear of inter-racial sex, but also a denial of it. As Young aptly points out, such a denial is difficult to imagine, "given what was happening in the colonies themselves, where the fast growing numbers of mixed-race populations [...] proved very literally the hybrid's unbounded fertility" (102).

In *The West and the Rest of Us: White Predators and the African Elite* (1987), Chinweizu argues that the West refuses to think outside of the epistemological framework of European Enlightenment. In this dissertation, I argue that Laurence, like other Westerners, cannot exempt herself from the legacy of Enlightenment thinking. Not only is her own thinking necessarily affected by the history of Victorian race theory, but her mobility or lack of it in the colonies is often determined by it. Such is the case, for example, in *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, when she explains that no European woman is to go to the market on foot (34). Mingling between solitary white women and black men could, according to Victorian race theories, result in "degeneration" of the white race and upset the imperial order. Similarly, in *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, Laurence's encounter with Somali women when they ask her for medicine is informed by Laurence's whiteness. That the women treat Laurence as superior medicine woman is testament to the violence of imperialism. The Somali women, themselves informed by Enlightenment thinking and the imperial order, view Laurence as the possible solution to and saviour of their plight.

As Laurence was influenced by Western notions of Africa and Victorian race theory, so too was she influenced by Western notions of feminism. Yet it is important to realize that, during the 1950s, when Laurence was living in and writing about Africa, she had little access to feminist writing per se. As Wendy Roy points out in "Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Margaret Laurence's African Writings" (2001), Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* was not published until 1963, the same year as Laurence's African memoir (34). While Simone De Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* was published in 1953, studies such as Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* and Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch* were not published until 1969 and 1970 respectively. Laurence's African work often takes up the material details of women's and men's lives, which she tries to understand without access to current feminist theories. Second-wave feminism of the late 1960s and 1970s was in its very early stages, and so Laurence was more influenced by first-wave feminism than she was by the later movement.

Essentially, first-wave feminism was an early feminist movement, a movement that took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was preceded by works such as Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1869), and Margaret Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845). It took equality of opportunity as its mission and fought for women's equal access to education and women's right to vote. Laurence acknowledges that she was influenced by first-wave feminism in Canada in "Books That Matter to Me" (1988). It is important to realize, however, that the Canadian movement was closely tied to its British predecessor and counterpart. It is also important to realize that first-wave feminism in its Anglo-European context was somewhat problematic. Feminist aims in Britain were intimately intertwined with imperialism. With regard to first-wave feminism in Britain, historians such as Nuper Chadhuri, Margaret Strobel, and Antoinette Burton explain that "the scramble for Africa" and first-wave feminism in Britain took place at virtually the same time. It is not surprising, then, that the rhetoric of British feminism at that time was intimately intertwined with the rhetoric of imperialism. Likewise, given that British feminism arose in the late nineteenth century, it is not surprising that feminists drew upon an imperial discourse that relied on notions of progress, British Nationalism, Darwinian evolution, and Enlightenment and Christian values to express their feminist aims. In order for British feminists to attain their goals, goals such as equal education for women and the vote, they had to align themselves with nationalist and therefore imperialist agendas.

In *Burdens of History* (1994), Antoinette Burton argues that, as British feminists gauged their own sense of progress against the perceived backwardness of the Indian woman, they simultaneously sought to rescue that woman from her "backward" plight. As Burton explains, the aim to save the Indian woman from this perceived backwardness was part of the British imperial notion of superiority. If British women could "uplift" the Indian woman by colonizing her, then they could demonstrate the superiority and goodness of the British empire. Furthermore, the British woman's role in rescuing the Indian woman would at once prove her importance to the imperial project and the relevance of her goodness and moral character to that project. The British feminist project was thus to advance imperialist aims. The imperial history of British feminism, at least in part, might explain why Laurence sought to distinguish herself from the British while she was in Africa, even as she was aware of the fact that she could not entirely do so—even as she acknowledged, that is, English-Canada's strong and ongoing ties to British cultural traditions.

Just as British feminists sought to save the Indian woman from her plight, so white South African feminists sought to rescue the black woman from hers. In her article on the South African suffragist movement in *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945* (1990), Cheryl Walker explains that white women shared black women's concern "about the breakdown of 'traditional' values and controls within African society" (329). However, to help the black South African woman maintain her 'traditional' way of life might be to define her as unchanging, non-progressive. The impetus to help black South African women uphold 'tradition' is the impetus to define oneself as progressive in relation to them. Within the framework of nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century white South African feminism, then, the ideology of aiding women was problematically aligned with the ideology of white superiority.

As British feminists strove to civilize the Indian woman in order to prove their white superiority, white South African feminists helped black South African women to maintain 'tradition' in order to prove their white superiority. In both cases, feminist aims were also white supremacist ones. Importantly, however, British feminists not only constructed Indian women as their imperial project, but they also constructed the notion of British "motherhood" as an imperial duty. The project of the Indian woman was, in fact, intertwined with the project of motherhood, since British women saw themselves as "mothering" Indian women. This notion of imperial motherhood will be especially significant to my discussion of Laurence's *Heart of a Stranger*. I analyze how Laurence's "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass" published in *Holiday* magazine and later in *Heart of a Stranger* (1976), engages in a discourse of motherhood.

Within the context of British feminism, the feminist idea of motherhood was also definitively linked to imperialism because it relied on the notion of "degeneration": the fear that the British race could deteriorate to become less civilized, more barbaric. The fear of degeneration revealed a fear of sex between the races. Anxieties over such "sexual dangers," as Robert Young and Ann Laura Stoler, among others, explain, were symptomatic of empire. British feminists spoke to that imperialist fear by promising to maintain, preserve, and mother the white race. In addition, the fear of "degeneration" also exposed Victorian anxieties over contagion and disease and the subsequent obsession with cleanliness. Such fears are epitomized in the clean, white body exemplified in the Pears soap campaigns of magazines such as *McClure's* in 1899. McClintock analyses such advertisements in *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (1995). British feminists spoke to those fears by promising to produce and maintain such clean, white bodies. Ideologies of white superiority, British motherhood, cleanliness and racial demarcation, then, were not at all separate during British imperialism. Rather, they circulated around one another and were intimately intertwined.

To understand Pan-Africanism's and negritude's intertwinement with Western ideas of Africa is to acknowledge the pervasiveness of Western imperialism. To understand first-wave British feminism's intertwinement with imperial history is to know the pervasiveness of both imperialism and patriarchy. Given that British feminism is caught up in imperialist notions, it is no wonder that many contemporary African feminists take issue with Western feminism. Black African feminists struggle against two types of ideologies: gender representation and the Western feminist movement, toward which many African women are ambivalent; and Western representations of Africa that are perpetuated and maintained, discursively imposing imperial and patriarchal identities upon African women. Florence Stratton asserts that African women writers such as Mariama Ba and Buchi Emecheta have been assimilated under a Western female problematic, and it is for this reason that such writers resist naming themselves as feminists. Emecheta, for instance, describes herself as a feminist "with a small f," marking her politics as distinct from those of Western feminists. Likewise, in "Womanism: the Dynamics of the Contemporary Black Female Novel in English" (1985), Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyeme strategically uses the term "womanism" instead of feminism. The difference between a "womanist" and a "feminist," she explains, is that a "womanist," as a black African woman, must be as attentive to issues of race as she is to issues of gender. She is therefore what a "feminist" (read: white Western feminist) is not.

African feminists, then, must seek to resist the terms that define Western ideologies and discursive constructions about Africa. Omolara Ogundipe-Leslie, in "The Female Writer and Her Commitment" (1987), suggests that one of the roles of the African woman writer is to speak back to the ways in which she has been represented and understood. Mineke Schipper, in her article entitled "Mother Africa on a Pedestal" (1987), explains how myths of origin in Christian and African cultures alike blame woman for the downfall of man. Like Emecheta, she argues that many male African writers confuse "the African mother" with "mother Africa." Susan Andrade also addresses the problematic ways in which African women are represented in Western discourse, suggesting that African women's act of writing is essential in order to work against Hegel's assumption that Africa is ahistorical, an epistemological void. The inscribing of women into African history through the act of writing, she argues, is a powerful way to speak back to such philosophies.

Laurence, of course, did not have access to such recent African feminist theories when she was living in and writing about Africa. Just as she developed her anti-imperialist stance without knowledge of recent postcolonial theorists, so she developed her feminist stance without knowledge of contemporary feminist theories. Laurence was a feminist in Africa because she stood against the domination and subordination of women. Yet such a stance is troubled for two reasons. First, it is troubled because Laurence approaches the plight of African women from the perspective of a Western woman. Second, it is troubled because Laurence represents a colonial presence that African women stand against. While she is in Africa, Laurence becomes acutely aware of her position as a Western woman there, acknowledging that in many ways she is at one with the colonial system she resists. Laurence was particularly disconcerted by the way her feminist desire to aid women in Africa often conflicted with her anti-imperialist desire to refrain from meddling in their affairs.

Importantly, however, until late in her life, when she became involved in associations that fought for women's rights, Laurence was not a political feminist. As I mention in the introduction to this dissertation, Laurence resists aligning herself with the feminist movement of the 1960s. In an interview with Bernice Lever, she states that she feels disinclined to make political statements in her work and argues that her fiction "may be political in a different sense" (27). As Thomas M.F. Gerry points out in "In Cases of Emergency: the Political Writing," Margaret Atwood "expresses similar reservations about joining a 'women's lib' group" in a letter to Margaret Laurence, written in 1971 (230). As Gerry explains, Atwood concludes her letter with the words "just writing the truth is in a way a better contribution anyway" (230).

Laurence countered dominant ideologies that were embedded within her very own culture. She both used and abused the ideologies of which she was a part. This notion of using and abusing dominant ideologies is one that I find especially useful in certain postcolonial and feminist theories. My own feminist ideology stems from theorists such as Judith Butler, Anne McClintock, and Ann Laura Stoler, among others. Laurence did not have access to these theorists' work, but such theorists are still important to a study of Laurence's anti-imperialism and feminism precisely because they demonstrate how one must work within existing discourses in order to counter them and because, in the case of McClintock and Stoler, they apply this strategy of use and abuse to both imperialism and patriarchy. Anne McClintock and Ann Laura Stoler also upset imperial and patriarchal theories by demanding that we pay heed to the material and historical conditions out of which those theories come. They draw upon historical materialism to demonstrate how colonized women constitute imperial identities as their abjected Other. Such analyses are particularly relevant to a study of *A Prophet's Camel Bell,* in which Laurence attempts to understand her position as a Westerner in Africa, a position that she must establish in relation to both black Africans and English colonials who reside in the African countries she visits. In this dissertation, I examine how Laurence, as a white Canadian woman in

Africa, posits herself alongside, as well as in opposition to, those English and African subjects.

In *Bodies That Matter* (1993), Judith Butler asserts that the association of femininity with materiality has a long history. The word "matter," for instance, can be traced to a "set of etymologies which link matter with *mater* and *matrix* (or the womb)" (31). Butler works against this association precisely because it values the man (the spiritual) over the woman (the material). In addition, Butler explains how French feminist Luce Irigaray mimes traditional philosophical discourse. Irigaray, Butler explains, works within and against the idea of woman as material in order to reconceptualize woman. She "mimes the grandiosity of the philosophical errors that she underscores" (36), occupying the place of the feminine but also resisting it by refusing to exactly replicate or resemble the feminine space philosophical discourse gives her. Butler's association of femininity with materiality is useful to my study of Laurence insofar as it offers an opportunity to view Laurence's writing as that which might both play into and resist a Western discourse that posits the woman as material. Butler's discussion of how Irigaray works within and against masculine philosophical discourse in order to challenge it is also useful insofar as it demonstrates how one must work within existing systems in order to contest them.

While African feminists rightly work against Western feminism, their aims, I would argue, are compatible with certain Western feminists such as Judith Butler, feminists who refuse to take the ways women are represented in patriarchal discourse as given. Butler's point that Western history and philosophical discourse represent man as spiritual and woman as material is helpful when examining the ways in which Western discourse associates black African women with "mother Africa." "Mother Africa," that is, is the earth, the bodily, the material. Butler works against representations of women as solely material, much as African feminists work against African women's material representation as "mother Africa."

Various anti-imperial and feminist theorists have emphasized "difference," as opposed to "negation," in their understandings of relationships between the colonizer and the colonized, men and women. They do so in response to some Western feminist scholars who, as Aihwa Ong asserts, have a "tendency to proceed by reversal: non-Western women are what we are not" (81). Trinh T. Minh-ha, for instance, calls for the gendered and the racialized to re-define difference: "Difference should be defined neither by the dominant sex nor by the dominant culture" (418). In the same vein, she wants to re-think and re-create the idea of "Otherness": "Otherness becomes empowerment, critical difference, when it is not given but re-created" (418). bell hooks and Chandra Talpade Mohanty specifically call for an account of "difference" between women. hooks rightly notes that "the idea of 'common oppression' [between women] was a false and corrupt platform disguising and mystifying the true nature of women's varied and complex social reality" (396). Mohanty points out that many feminist writings represent a singular notion of "Third World woman," "an image that appears arbitrarily constructed but nevertheless carries with it the authorizing signature of Western humanist discourse" (257). Since I examine how Laurence plays into and resists Western ideologies in her depictions of African and Métis men and women, Minh-ha's call to redefine Otherness, to disentangle it from Western ideology, will be especially useful for this study. Since I examine Laurence's feminism as it is exemplified in both her African and Canadian writing, Mohanty's and hooks's call to account for difference among groups of women will also be useful. I contend that privileged women such as Laurence must join in the struggle toward decolonization and women's liberation. To this effect, my dissertation aims to articulate the complex ways in which a Western woman such as Laurence works toward such goals.

Laurence scholars have gestured toward links between anti-imperialism and feminism in Laurence's writing, although no one has yet written a full-length study of Laurence's writing in its anti-imperial and feminist contexts. In an article entitled "Writing About Others: the African Stories" (1997), critic Gabrielle Collu draws attention to the possession of the African woman, Afua, by the character of Matthew in Laurence's "The Drummer of All the World," published in Laurence's collection of African short stories, *The Tomorrow-Tamer* (1960). Collu suggests that "the political and economic possession of the land and the sexual possession of Afua complement and reinforce each other" (25). I would argue that Laurence is aware of and points out, through the characters of Matthew and Afua, how the imperial domination of lands and peoples can be intertwined with the patriarchal domination of women. In this way she exemplifies both her anti-imperialist and her feminist beliefs. In an article entitled "The African and Canadian Heroines: From Bondage to Grace" (1997), critic Barbara Pell also gestures toward links between Laurence's anti-imperialist and feminist beliefs: "In the cultural upheaval of the new Africa on the verge of independence [...] Laurence [...] saw images that she associates with the end of her heroines' pilgrimage out of bondage: freedom, dignity, and spiritual grace" (36-7). Pell notes Laurence's associations between imperial domination over colonized peoples and patriarchal domination over women, explicitly connecting Laurence's anti-imperialism and feminism. In this study I maintain that Laurence is acutely aware of the ways in which imperialism and patriarchy intersect. At the same time, however, Laurence pays heed to those two ideologies and how they are neither reducible to one another nor historically and geographically universal.

In *Into Africa with Margaret Laurence* (1992), Fiona Sparrow points to Laurence's feminism in Africa in her discussion of *A Tree for Poverty* (1954). While Laurence primarily translates the poems and tales of Somali men in this work, she also takes up the interesting legend of Queen Arawailo, a tale that depicts the cruel demise of a matriarch. Many male writers who write about that tale, such as Wil Waal and Drake Brockman, emphasize the justification of the death of the woman; Laurence, however, focuses on how Somali women mourn the Queen's death. Sparrow describes Laurence's woman-centered emphasis in *A Tree for Poverty*:

> Laurence describes how the women mourned Arawailo's death and put green branches on her grave, while the men rejoiced and threw stones on it. This tradition has not died and men and women continue to lay their different offerings on the roadside cairns that are thought of as "shrines to Arawailo" (128). 64

Even though *A Tree for Poverty* translates African men's writing, Sparrow views it as a feminist work, accentuating the ways in which Laurence focuses on particular versions of tales. Sparrow stresses Laurence's interest in and sympathy for women characters in the tales; she also stresses Laurence's emphasis on African women's responses to those tales. Sparrow's analysis points to the ways in which Laurence demonstrates feminism in her

African works. In *A Tree for Poverty,* Laurence seeks to re-value women characters in Somali tales as well as women's versions and interpretations of those tales.

I agree with Sparrow's argument that Laurence is a feminist, even though she primarily addresses poetry and prose written by men in *A Tree for Poverty.* I admire Sparrow's analysis of the ways in which Laurence foregrounds women's roles in Somali tales. My outlook on Laurence in Africa, however, differs fundamentally from Sparrow's. Sparrow emphasizes Laurence as a gentle, feminine, and sympathetic outsider in Africa. By contrast, I argue that such a view of Laurence not only elides the complex Western history from which Laurence comes, but also repeats that very history. To describe Laurence as a gentle, sympathetic outsider is to repeat Western discourse that defines white woman as close to the landscape, the earth, and the Natives that inhabit it. In contrast to Sparrow, I address not only Laurence's fraught subject-position as a woman who works within and against imperial and patriarchal discourse, but also how Laurence, as a Western literary figure, has been constructed and inscribed as gentle and tolerant by that Western discourse.

Nationalism and Feminism in her Homeland: the Canadian Writing in Context

I analyze how Laurence resists imperialism and patriarchy in both Africa and Canada and how ideas of Africa and the history of Western feminism are part of imperialism and patriarchy. By doing so, I foreground Laurence's fraught subject-position both in Africa and in Canada. First, I draw attention to how Laurence was caught up in imperial values and discourses regarding Africa, even as she worked against them. As we have seen, according to Anthony Kwame Appiah, the idea of Africa as one—as not just a geographical location but that which is unified by culture and identities—is an idea constructed by the imperial West. It is a recent invention[6] which is to a large extent the product of a European gaze. Laurence is no exception to Westerners and specifically Canadians whose ideologies emerged out of an imperial history. Second, Laurence's anti-imperialist stance in Canada is caught up in Canadian nationalism. The history and ongoing presence of imperialism in Canada was and is very different from imperialism in Africa, and, for that reason, Laurence's stance against imperialism in Africa is not reducible to her stance against imperialism in Canada.

I still argue, however, that Laurence's anti-imperialism and feminism in Africa and in Canada must be understood in relation to one another. I do not read Laurence's African and Canadian writing together solely because I believe that Laurence's early experiences in Africa lead her to understand cultural differences in Canada. Rather, I read them together because doing so highlights the different contexts about which Laurence wrote: the decolonization and ongoing development of Africa and the continuing oppression of the indigenous in Canada. Juxtaposing these two contexts offers an opportunity to understand Laurence's subject-position as one that was fraught not only when she was away, but also when she was at home. In Africa, Laurence is aligned with the imperialists by culture and the African women by gender; in Canada, she is aligned by culture with a history of British settler colonization and, yet, by gender and by her own self-positioning with those who have been oppressed. Laurence is at home neither in Canada nor in her own woman's body, for both the imperial and patriarchal histories that she resists are also that of which she is a part.

In Canada, Laurence is anti-imperialist because she works against the colonization of indigenous peoples. She therefore addresses how domination and subordination can manifest themselves *within* as well as *between* nations. As Laurence notes in her introduction to her essay entitled "Man of Our People," she has always been troubled by the history of the colonization of First Nations people in Canada (161). Originally published in *Canadian Forum* in 1976 as a review of George Woodcock's book, *Gabriel Dumont: the Métis Chief and his Lost World*, and later published in *Heart of a Stranger*, "Man of Our People" discusses the colonial history of the Métis, focusing on the Métis leaders Gabriel Dumont and Louis Riel during the North-West rebellion of 1885. That essay not only addresses the history of colonization within Canada, but also the continuation of the colonial project. Referring to Gabriel Dumont, Laurence states, "Has the voice of Gabriel anything to tell us here and now, in a world totally different from his? I believe it has" (166). Laurence is clearly concerned with how the domination and subordination of peoples continues in Canada in various ways.

In the Manawaka series, which consists of Laurence's five Canadian works of fiction, Laurence further expresses her unease with the continual subordination of Métis in the ways in which she takes up the relationships between characters with Anglo-Scots ancestry and characters with Métis ancestry. As mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation, Jack McClelland, Laurence's publisher and founder of the Canadian publishing company *McClelland and Stewart*. states in a letter to Laurence that he finds her last Manawaka novel, *The Diviners* (1974), her most ambitious one. It is ambitious, he says, because Laurence attempts to bring together the history of white settlers and Métis people in Canada: "You have confronted yourself with the formidable problem of relating the two streams of heritage" (*Imagining*, 185). Paradoxically, in light of McClelland's statement, *The Diviners* might be read as anti-imperialist but also as expressing a kind of national imperialism. On the one hand, *The Diviners* is anti-imperialist in its attempt to go back to a history of conflict between those "two streams of heritage": it works toward healing a broken past between those of Anglo-Scots and those of Métis origins. By doing so, it addresses both the history of colonization within Canada and the continuation of that imperial project. On the other hand, *The Diviners* might be read as expressing national imperialism, since the bringing together of those with Anglo-Scots ancestry and those with Métis ancestry—the bringing together of the two as one—might be, as theorists such as Trinh T. Minh-ha and Chandra Talpade Mohanty explain, to negate difference rather than to acknowledge it. Despite the fact that Laurence strives to unify those with disparate histories, however, I maintain that her work is still anti-imperialist. With her creation of complex and dynamic characters of varying cultures, Laurence's Canadian writing indeed foregrounds rather than negates difference. It imagines a Canadian nation that is free from cultural conflict. It hopes for a Canada that moves toward cross-cultural understanding.

Laurence was not only concerned with the ways in which indigenous peoples were colonized by white settlers in Canada. She also believed that Canada should distinguish itself from Britain and the practice of British cultural traditions. Laurence expresses her concern with how the domination and subordination of peoples persist in twentieth-century North America in "Ivory Tower, Or Grass Roots? The Novelist as Socio-political Being" (1978). Referring to the cultural domination of the USA over Canada, she asserts that Canada "had been under the colonial sway of Britain once and was now under the colonial sway of America" (15). Such an emphasis on cultural domination plays into the nationalist rhetoric of Laurence's time. As Eva Mackey points out in *The House of Difference* (2002), for example, national identity in Canada emerged in an attempt to create a Canadian culture and identity "that would differentiate Canada from other nations, specifically the United States" (13). Importantly, however, the understanding of the cultural domination of America over Canada as imperialism proper needs to be questioned. Such an assertion problematically implies that Anglo-Canadians are colonized. Clearly, Anglo-Canadians do not experience imperialism in the same way that those from colonized countries or First Nations in Canada do. And yet, as can be seen in her primarily Celtic-Canadian and Métis characters in her Canadian fiction, Laurence draws attention to early Anglo-Scots settlers' and Métis' shared sense of dispossession from their lands. Critics Anna Johnson and Alan Lawson explain that early Anglo-Scots settlers to Canada were often themselves dispossessed from their home countries. Because of this sense of dispossession, Johnson and Lawson argue, early settlers did not maintain a strong allegiance to their home countries, as those sent to rule in colonies of occupation often did (362). Laurence knows the history of Anglo-Scots colonization of the indigenous in Canada, and yet she strives to bring the two heritages together by foregrounding the ways in which both groups were expelled from their homelands. Her point of view is epitomized in the Biblical quotation from which she takes the title of her book of essays, *Heart of a Stranger*: "Also, thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Exodus 223:9). Laurence's intentions to work toward cross-cultural understanding are formidable. Her amalgamation of the two groups based on their shared dispossession is, however, fraught, since the one group (English-Canada) is responsible for the dispossession of the other (First Nations) and indeed continues its imperialist practices toward them.[7]

Both aspects of Laurence's anti-imperialist beliefs about Canada—her concern with the colonization of the indigenous and her concern with Canada as distinct from Britain and America—are intertwined with Canadian nationalism. Laurence's anti-imperialist desire to work against the oppression of indigenous peoples, to bring together the "two streams of heritage," is nationalist since it conceptualizes Canada not as fragmented but as united, as one nation. Laurence's anti-imperialist desire to distinguish Canada from Britain is also nationalist since it understands Canada as a country with its own identity rather than as part of its so-called "mother-land." The sense that Canada is beyond its history as a colony that practiced British cultural tradition and is now an independent nation establishing its own identity was prevalent during the height of English-Canadian nationalism in the 1960s, when Laurence was writing and publishing her African and Canadian works. Laurence was writing at the same time that critics and writers such as Northrop Frye and Margaret Atwood were taking up questions of Canadian national identity in *The Bush Garden* (1971) and *Survival* (1972) respectively. Thus, Laurence's own concern with defining what Canada is and who Canadians are is not surprising. Laurence acknowledges Canada's history as a colony of Britain, but also pays heed to how settlers colonized aboriginals and how aboriginals and immigrants continue to be oppressed. She values the break from Britain, but also knows and is against Canada's ongoing imperialist practices.

The intertwining of Laurence's anti-imperialism and nationalism, however, is problematic, since nationalism is in some respects an imperialist project. As Eva Mackay points out, Canadian nationalism, or, more specifically, what Mackey calls the Canadian "narrative of nationhood," is created and sustained through images of collaboration and cultural contact between white settlers and indigenous peoples. This "narrative of nationhood" denies Canada's history of cultural genocide and suggests that there was and is benevolence between white settlers as representatives of the state and aboriginal peoples:

> Aboriginal people are necessary players in nationalist myths: they are the colourful recipients of benevolence, the necessary 'others' who reflect back white Canada's self-image of tolerance. Pluralism and tolerance have a key place, and an institutionalized place, in the cultural politics of national identity in Canada. (3)

If Canada's "narrative of nationhood" involves the coming together of white settlers and aboriginal peoples in order to "reflect back white Canada's self-image of tolerance," then Laurence's project of bringing together the "two streams of heritage" plays into and helps to sustain that narrative. The symbolic giving back of the Scottish plaid pin and the Métis knife between Anglo-Scot Morag Gunn and Métis Jules Tonnerre in Laurence's last Manawaka novel, *The Diviners,* might be seen as an act of benevolence that serves to construct and sustain a gentle and tolerant Canada that is nevertheless imperialist in its patching over of a fraught and troubled past.

The Diviners looks back to a history of Canadian peoples and is nostalgic in its re-uniting of white settlers and aboriginal peoples. As such, it imagines Canada as a nation that engages in cross-cultural understanding. It links English-Canadians to a past of which they are not ashamed. Interestingly, Gunilla Florby's 1997 book entitled *The*

Margin Speaks argues that Canadians are severed from their collective histories for two reasons: first, because the history of Canada does not adequately take into account the history of First Nations; and second, because, as Diana Brydon and Helen Tiffin point out, in *Decolonizing Fictions* (1993), within settler-invader narratives there are silences "around their own complicity in the displacement and destruction of Native peoples" (23). Florby suggests that the separation from one's collective history gives rise to what Robert Kroetsch calls "the genealogical quest of Canadian writing" (65). Laurence's Manawaka series, "where myths of family origins represent the archetypal Western Canadian experience" (Kroetsch 22), is an example of such a genealogical quest. For Laurence, such a genealogical quest involves the coming together of those Canadians with Anglo-Scots heritage and those with Métis heritage. In this dissertation I contend that Laurence indeed creates and sustains a "narrative of nationhood" that posits tolerance and benevolence as particularly Canadian. At the same time, however, I contend that Laurence was not deluded about the history and continuation of violence and colonization toward indigenous peoples in Canada. While she *hopes* for a Canada that works toward cross-cultural understanding, she does not deny the history of First Nations, and she is not silent about Anglo-Canadians' "complicity in the displacement and destruction of Native peoples" (Brydon and Tiffin 23). As Laurence explains in an interview in the film, *First Lady of Manawaka* (1978), she seeks to expose rather than deny such violent and ongoing Canadian imperial histories.

Throughout the 1970s, as Donna Bennett points out, the view that Canada must affirm its own national identity was being challenged by the idea that Canada is a diverse mosaic that should not and could not establish a singular and monolithic identity (170).

To some extent, Laurence's viewpoint anticipates and reflects this shift: Laurence was a Canadian nationalist who desired an independent Canadian identity apart from one that is defined by British cultural traditions; at the same time, however, she valued immigrant and First Nations cultures. Laurence recognizes continuing imperialism in Canada, but she also believes that immigrant and First Nations cultures define Canada as a nation. To foreground settler, immigrant, and First Nations cultures in Canada is to inscribe Canada as a pluralist nation. As Mackey explains, in Canada, "power and dominance function through [...] liberal, inclusionary, pluralistic, multiple and fragmented formulations and practices concerning culture and difference" (5). Nationalism in Canada does not obliterate difference; rather, the construction and maintenance of that notion of difference sustains the very idea of Canada as a nation.

I argue that the idea of Canada as pluralist, or, to use a more recent term, multicultural, is intimately intertwined with Canada's national imaginary. I understand the phrase "national imaginary" as a more recent one than "national identity." "National imaginary," in opposition to "national identity," is informed by the Lacanian notion of the imaginary, in which the child regards himself as an imaginary whole, rejecting his fragmented self in order to see the self as a whole.[8] The idea of rejecting fragmentation in order to construct a whole, I claim, is implicit in Canada's sense of itself, its national imaginary. Paradoxically, however, it is precisely that fragmentation that serves to unify Canada. In *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* (1994), Charles Taylor asserts that the Quebecois in Canada should be given special rights and privileges apart from those given to ethnic minorities in Canada. If they are not, he argues, then the French risk becoming another ethnic minority. That Taylor makes this argument problematically suggests that he fears French culture will be subsumed: not by the English but by proliferating ethnic minorities. And yet, as Himani Bannerji asserts, multiculturalism, in Taylor's view, is that which holds together Canada as a country. Multiculturalism becomes the moral mandate against any—and especially Quebec's—separation. No one must separate, the argument goes. We are a multicultural country and therefore must stay together. In this way, as critics such as Himani Bannerji and Smaro Kamboureli assert, ethnic minorities are "used" to uphold and maintain Canada's "two solitudes," Canada as a bilingual and bicultural country. Multiculturalism itself becomes that upon which Canada is imagined. Canada's national imaginary—perhaps somewhat ironically—is that which is continually in crisis, continually threatened to be fragmented into diverse and disparate cultures and identities. I contend that Laurence's desire to bring together those "two streams of heritage" serves to create and sustain Canada's national imaginary: it manages that crisis of separation. Laurence imagines a nation that is one precisely because it encompasses and sustains cultural difference.

The shift of which Donna Bennett speaks, from viewing Canada as a nation independent from Britain to viewing it as a mosaic without a singular and definable national identity, is part of a larger tendency to see Canada as maturing and progressing throughout time. Critics such as Smaro Kamboureli and Neil Besner point out how many Canadian critics still view Canada problematically as a country that has progressed from colony of Britain, to independent nation, to postcolonial and multicultural nation (40, 44). Such a seamless progression denies Canada's continuing imperial policies and also suggests that Canada is above and beyond other nations. In "Looking Elsewhere for

Answers to the Postcolonial Question" (2003), Donna Palmateer Pennee argues that Canada represents itself through this rhetoric of progression, growth and maturity in its international relations policy. In this view, Canada is no longer a colonial dependency, as it once was; rather, it is a civilized nation capable of moving beyond its borders to help those that are, supposedly not civilized. It suggests that Canada has come of age and thus has a responsibility to help those of countries that are underdeveloped.

The idea that Canada has progressed from colony to multicultural country in its own right plays into imperialist ideology that posits Western countries in opposition to a supposedly underdeveloped Africa. Just as movements regarding ideas of Africa, such as Pan-Africanism and negritude, are embedded within imperialist ideology even as they seek to resist it, so Canadian nationalism is also embedded within imperialist ideology, even as it purports to be tolerant and multicultural. While Laurence believes in the decolonization of African countries, I argue, she, like others, cannot exclude herself from Western imperialist ideologies. Likewise, even though Laurence desires a Canada that brings together diverse cultures in understanding and unity, she cannot exempt herself from English-Canadian nationalist ideologies that construct Canada in opposition to African countries. Laurence recognizes her complicity with imperialism in Africa when she states, in *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* that she was against imperialism but ultimately realizes that "I, too, had been of that company" (251). By contrast, however, the author does not seem to recognize her complicity with imperialist aims in Canada. She does not seem to recognize, that is, that positing a united Canada might be imperialist in its negation of difference, its reconciliation of a troubled past. Laurence believes that she is undoing imperialist aims in Canada, even as, in some ways, she maintains them and cannot disentangle herself from them.

If imperialism and patriarchy are intertwined, and if anti-imperialism must be read in relation to feminism, then how, we might ask, do the two relate in Canada and in relation to Laurence's Canadian work? First-wave feminism in Canada, like first-wave feminism in Britain, was tied up with imperialist aims. Feminist scholar Roberta Hamilton points out that some English-speaking, middle-class suffragists engaged in racist and ethnocentric arguments. They pitted themselves against non-English-speaking immigrants, arguing that the nation needed protection against foreigners. Ultimately, "they appealed to the male electorate and politicians to grant them suffrage in return for safe votes from like-minded women" (88). Just as British feminists perceived themselves as superior to the Indian woman, so white Canadian feminists perceived themselves as superior to immigrants. Hamilton explains that "the main goal of liberal feminism in Canada from the time of Mary Wollstonecraft, through the first-wave of feminism that culminated in the vote, to the lobby that produced *The Royal Commission of the Status of Women* (1970) and beyond, has been equality of opportunity" (87). And yet, such opportunity is often at the expense of immigrants and First Nations. "Female suffrage for all British subjects was granted at the federal level and in all provinces except Quebec between 1916 and 1922" (Hamilton 88), but aboriginals in Canada did not attain the vote until 1960, when the phasing out of residential schools began.

As Cathy James explains, "On 18 October 1929, five Alberta women [Henrietta Muir Edwards, Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney, Emily Murphy, and Irene Parby] were successful in achieving an historic ruling from the highest court in the British

Empire regarding the legal status of white women in Canada" (216). These feminists are well-known as the quintessential first-wave feminists in Canada. In "Books That Matter To Me," Laurence cites these women as influential to her:

> Nellie McClung's personal history of strong feminism, the battles she had fought before I was born, to have women proclaimed 'persons,' her fight for women's right to vote [...]. Only in my young adulthood did I realize how far-reaching was the victory of such women as Nellie McClung and Emily Murphy, to have women recognized as persons. They won in 1929. (24)

That Laurence admires these feminists and their achievements is not surprising. McClung and Murphy were her predecessors and role models: Laurence's own right to vote and the state's recognition of her as a person might be credited to them. That first-wave feminism was caught up in imperialist aims, however, suggests that Laurence's position is fraught, since she is anti-imperialist and yet adopts a feminist stance that is historically intertwined with imperialism.

Significantly, Laurence's feminist beliefs changed throughout the course of her life. In Africa, she struggled to understand her own role as a Western woman who hoped to help African women, despite her cultural alignment with the imperial state. As Sparrow's analysis demonstrates, in Africa, Laurence also sought to value and tell African women's versions of Somali tales. In Canada, as I have mentioned, Laurence was influenced by first-wave feminists such as Nellie McClung. Interestingly, her Manawaka series also shows that she was somewhat influenced by the emerging second wave of feminism, even though "Laurence had largely completed her work before the crest of the feminist movement in the nineteen-seventies" (Bloom 168). Issues pertinent to women in the North American context—issues such as equal opportunity for women to work outside of the home—are evident in Laurence's Canadian fiction. The character Stacey in *The Fire-Dwellers* (1969), for example, feels trapped within the confines of her body and her home, wishing to escape that which is deemed a woman's place. Likewise, the character Morag in *The Diviners* refuses to play the role of housewife for the patriarchal figure Brooke Skelton.

It is particularly noteworthy that Laurence became involved with specifically feminist issues during the latter part of her life, after she had completed the Manawaka series. As mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation, in the 1980s Laurence was politically involved with such associations as "Women Against Sexual Assault" and "Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL)," of which she was honourary director in 1982. Her fight not only for feminism but also for anti-imperialism is evident in her involvement with associations such as "Women for Peace," "Energy Probe," and in her political efforts toward "Canada's need for a new foreign policy" (letter from Andrew Brewin).

This chapter has examined the theoretical context within which I situate Laurence's work in this study. I examine the term "imperialism" as it figures in the work of contemporary historians and theorists alike, and I interrogate Western ideas of Africa, delineating how Laurence is necessarily caught up in such ideas. In addition, I address how, historically, Western feminism is caught up in imperialist aims, arguing that Laurence's feminism and anti-imperialism are not always reconcilable. Laurence is aware of her complicity with imperialism in Africa, yet she does not seem to be aware that positing Canada as a unified nation is imperialist in its own right. Even as she situates Canada as one, however, she still works toward cross-cultural understanding in that country. She maintains that the histories of white settlers and aboriginals in Canada must be understood as intimately intertwined. Finally, this chapter examines Laurence's nationalism and considers her strong sense of identity as a Canadian with Scots-Presbyterian roots. This sense of identity does not, however, preclude sympathy with and compassion for immigrants and aborignals in Canada. As she states in her *Heart of a Stranger* essay, "Man of Our People," "Canadians who, like myself, are the descendants of various settlers, many of whom came to this country as oppressed or dispossessed peoples, must hear native peoples' voices *and ultimately become part of them*" (166, my emphasis).

Chapter Two

Margaret Laurence in Africa: Conflicts of Culture and Gender in The Prophet's Camel Bell and This Side Jordan

In this chapter I examine how Laurence's ambivalent position as a Canadian woman in Africa manifests itself in her African memoir, *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* and in her only African novel, *This Side Jordan.*[9] Discussing *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* I consider how Laurence identifies with and dissociates herself from English colonialists and Somali women; I also examine how Laurence becomes uncomfortable with her own representation as a white woman in Africa. Discussing *This Side Jordan,* I consider how Laurence is situated in imperial discourse even as she sees herself as outside of it. V.Y. Mudimbe asserts that the West assumes it is progressive in opposition to a primitive Africa and therefore "cannot talk about Africa outside the Western text" (*Invention,* 462). Anthony Kwame Appiah maintains that the West views Africa as one entity and that such a notion continues in Western discourse and through movements such as Pan-Africanism and negritude. This chapter examines how Laurence negotiates not only Western notions of Africa, but also the histories of feminism and imperialism, histories that I discussed in chapter one of this dissertation. I argue that the entrenchment of imperialism within the history of feminism haunts Margaret Laurence in Africa. That entrenchment emerges problematically as Laurence and the characters she depicts interact with and seek to aid Africans in Africa. Laurence's anti-imperialist and feminist values conflict in these two African works and never come together in an easy or unproblematic way.[10]

As I explain in chapter one of this dissertation, first-wave feminism in its Anglo-European context was somewhat problematic, since feminist aims in Britain were intimately intertwined with imperialism. In order for British feminists to attain their goals, goals such as equal education for women and the vote, they had to align themselves with nationalist and therefore imperialist agendas. As Antoinette Burton explains in *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915* (1994), "the languages of imperialism—articulating as they did the parameters of cultural superiority, political trusteeship, and sheer Englishness—[... were] among the most readily available to women involved in various aspects of the British women's movement from the Victorian period onward" (2). First-wave feminism in Canada had ties to its British counterpart. Fighting for equality in education and suffrage, white women in Canada pitted themselves against non-white immigrants and aboriginals and promised white men like-minded votes. Laurence is unwittingly affected by this historical embedding of imperialism within feminism. That history, in part, as we will see, determines her actions in Africa.

If Laurence is defined in part by the historical discourses of imperialism and feminism, then she is also determined and limited, in *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, by the conventions of the genre itself. One of the first theorists of autobiography, and the supposed "dean of autobiographical studies" (Friedman 34), George Gusdorf maintains that autobiography consists of a "conscious awareness of the singularity of each individual life" and suggests that the biographical self is achieved by means of separation and singularity" (Watson 59). As Sidonie Smith argues with regard to the genre of autobiography, "Since the boy comes to speak with the authority of the father and all fathers before him [...], the male experience is identified as the normative human paradigm" (12). Autobiography, then, might be thought of as a masculine genre.

Entering into this genre, Laurence takes on a traditionally male, authorial voice. She is also a non-African who problematically attempts to take the perspective, in *This Side Jordan*, of colonized Africans. As the author of a novel that takes up the lives of both colonialists and colonized subjects, Laurence is in a powerful, authorial position, a position that enables her, somewhat problematically, to write the Other into existence. As such, she sometimes inadvertently replicates the very patriarchal and imperial ideologies she seeks to resist.

An examination of Laurence's African memoir, *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, alongside her African novel, *This Side Jordan*, offers an opportunity to consider the ways in which Laurence struggles to represent herself and others in language. In response to autobiographical theories such as George Gusdorf's—theories that privilege the singular "I," the unified ego, individuality and separation from both others and the external world—feminist theorists of autobiography stress both the inability of women to authentically represent themselves within such a mode and the need for a model that embraces multiplicity and connectedness to the community and the environment. Even as Laurence's memoir is a kind of quest for the self, Laurence attempts to reject a focus solely on the "I." Rather, she connects with and focuses on the community in *The Prophet's Camel Bell* by engaging with the British and Somali peoples she meets. Laurence is reducible neither to the imperialist and patriarchal discourses within which she is embedded nor to the masculine autobiographical genre in which she writes herself. As in her later memoir, *Dance on the Earth* (1989), Laurence exceeds the terms within which she represents herself. She negotiates her stance as an anti-imperialist and a feminist who is not exclusively so. Her humanity ultimately cannot be reduced to the language and labels that define her.

The African Memoir: *The Prophet's Camel Bell*

The Prophet's Camel Bell, published in 1963, addresses the author's experiences in Somaliland in 1951 and 1952, before that country gained independence from Britain. Laurence describes her position as the wife of an engineer hired to construct ballehs, large structures that collect water during the rains for the long dry periods in Somaliland's Haud desert. The memoir is based on personal journals that Laurence wrote when she resided in Somaliland. As Nora Foster Stovel explains in "The Face of Africa: Laurence's Portraits of Self and Other in *The Prophet's Camel Bell, This Side Jordan, The Tomorrow-Tamer*" (2005), Laurence "revisited her Somali diary in Canada a decade later, in a break from writing *The Stone Angel,*" and subsequently wrote *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (3).

The first chapter of the memoir, titled, ironically, "Innocent Voyage," is itself ironic because it pokes fun of Laurence's own tourist-like position in Somaliland. "There you go," Laurence asserts, "rejoicing, as so you should, for anything might happen and you are carrying with you your notebook and camera so you may catch vast and elusive life in a word and a snapshot" (9). Laurence acknowledges that the self and the place in which that self resides cannot be reduced to or fully understood in language or image. More specifically, Laurence implies that the memoir we are about to read and the photos she includes within it cannot adequately capture her experience. The second chapter, entitled "Footsteps," plays upon Richard Burton's *First Footsteps in East Africa* (1856) and challenges Burton's imperialist narrative of Africa. As Laurence enters into the genres of autobiography and travel writing, she at once makes a stand against them: she rejects the idea that one's experiences can be deduced within that genre, and she counters the conquest of and claims to Africa in travel-narratives such as Burton's.

The memoir includes a description of the construction of the *ballehs* for which Jack was responsible, and it also includes Laurence's unfavourable impressions of English colonialists, as well as her take on Italian settlers in the area, who "had come out to Ethiopia as settlers" (161). The last third of the memoir consists of detailed descriptions of Somali characters with whom Laurence was acquainted: a chapter entitled "A Teller of Tales," for example, depicts Hersi, Jack and Margaret's interpreter and a man who, ironically, has a speech impediment but also has "the power to conjure up words and to conceive orations" (169); a chapter entitled "Mohamed," likewise, depicts Jack and Margaret's interpreter and cook, who was always singing and "dressed vividly, favouring robes of royal purple" (179). In some ways, along the lines of conventional autobiography, Laurence seeks "self-knowledge" (Morley 52); and, yet, much of the memoir focuses upon other people and is an attempt to connect with Somali communities. Laurence reveals her Western subject-position in her depiction of herself and the Somali peoples she meets, even as she seeks to challenge imperialist perspectives and demonstrates the utmost respect for those peoples.

On the one hand, as the wife of a Canadian engineer in Somaliland, Laurence is quite explicitly involved in construction and development in Africa: she therefore occupies the position of a memsahib[11] and an imperialist. On the other hand, as a woman from Canada, a settler-colony that one might describe as having been colonized by Britain itself, she does not regard herself as a memsahib and a colonialist. In the memoir, Laurence defines herself as apart from European women in Africa by rejecting English women's roles and English customs in the colonies. When Jack hires a servant, and when that servant calls Laurence "memsahib," she immediately rejects that title: "I could not face the prospect of being called "Memsahib," a word which seemed to have connotations of white man's burden, paternalism, everything I did not believe in" (23). Interestingly, however, she seems to enjoy the role of "memsahib" at certain moments in the text: when a Somali man says to her that "never in his entire long life had he known such a fine memsahib," she admits that she is flattered (40). She initially rejects being called "memsahib" and then, at least momentarily, accepts that role, demonstrating how her identity as a white Canadian woman in Africa is fraught. Although she is not English but Canadian, she is still "memsahib"; although she is anti-imperialist in her beliefs, she still fulfills that role as memsahib to her servants and other Somalis.

In an attempt to further separate herself from English imperialists, Laurence explicitly details how her husband's and her own customs are different from the practices of the English: when their servant Mohamed brings them tea, Laurence must explain that, unlike the English, she and Jack do not take tea in the morning (30). However, while in this instance she makes a point of distinguishing herself from the English in terms of customs, at other moments in the memoir she does not. When she returns from her venture in the Somali town, for example, she refers to the convention that discourages "European women" from traveling to the town without a white, male consort. In this instance, Laurence uses and understands the phrase "European women" as inclusive of herself (34). By explaining to Mohamed that she and Jack do not take tea in the morning, Laurence foregrounds the differences between her own Canadian customs and those of the English; yet by using the phrase "European women" to refer not only to such women but also to herself, she obscures the differences between English women and North American ones. Laurence not only manifests her ambivalent position through such contradictory instances, but she also explicitly states and explains this position. Speaking of her husband's and her own stance as those who are part of colonial life and yet who desire to separate themselves from it, for example, she states that "It was not easy for us to become accustomed to colonial life, and it was not easy for Mohamed to get used to our departures from it" (31).[12]

Laurence clearly situates her husband's and her own difference from the English in their status as Canadians: when speaking of their relationship with their servant, she states that "[To Mohamed] we were neither *Ingrese* (English) nor Italiano. We came from another and unknown tribe. 'Canadian peoples different,' he would say" (31). Even though the Laurences employ Somalis to cook and serve them, they do so with reluctance. For Mohammed, it is this reluctance that makes the Laurences, as Canadian, "different." Laurence also situates her "Canadian" status as distinct from English colonials in her discussion with the Baron, an acquaintance of Laurence who is "a major in the Somaliland Scouts" (228). When the Baron overhears a memsahib calling him "common," he looks at Laurence and calls her a "bloody colonial.'" "I told him," Laurence asserts, "that there was only one thing worse than calling a Canadian an American, and that was to call one a colonial" (229-30). That the Baron confuses Laurence with the "memsahib" he overhears, and that he calls Laurence a "colonial," shows that simply being a white married women in Africa necessarily constructs one as such. Laurence rejects the labels of memsahib, colonial, and American. She locates her "difference" from such colonials in her national identity as a "Canadian."

Laurence not only differentiates herself from English colonials by repeatedly referring to her Canadian citizenship, but also by indicating that she does not believe in English missions in Africa. While explaining that missionary work was banned in Somalia because the Somalis were strong Muslims and waged a war against missionary work, Laurence implies that she supports the ban, since she "could never believe in anyone's right to foist his religious views upon others" (235). Importantly, however, she does not find the disjunctions between her own culture and religion and the Somalis' easily reconcilable. When Hersi explains his faith that events occur solely at the doing of Allah, Laurence explains her difficulty in understanding his view (59). The disjunctions in culture and religion between herself and the Somali people, Laurence suggests, trouble the relationships between them. As she explains in a letter dated 8 June 1962 to her American publishing agent, Willis Kingsley Wing, she and Jack discover the "complexities inherent in relationships with people of a totally different culture."

Laurence's stance against foisting one's religion upon others and her acknowledgement of the difficulties in relationships between people of such different cultures and religions demonstrate her troubled, ambivalent position. She distinguishes herself from the dominant English culture that would impose their cultural and religious views upon others even as she is a part of that dominant culture and shares many of the same religious beliefs. Yet Laurence is able to distinguish herself as a Canadian from British colonialists because she understands Canada as a country that itself was colonized by the British. In her essay entitled "Ivory Tower, Or Grass Roots? The Novelist as

Socio-political Being" (1978), she says that "It was not very difficult to relate [my African experience] to my own land, which had been under the colonial sway of Britain once and was now under the colonial sway of America" (15). Let us examine, then, the ways in which Laurence somewhat problematically understands Canada as having been colonized by the British.

In "Settler Colonies," Anna Johnson and Alan Lawson explain that early European settlers to Canada were often themselves dispossessed from their home countries. Johnson and Lawson also suggest that, because of their dispossession, such early settlers did not maintain a strong allegiance to their home countries, as those sent to rule in colonies of occupation often did (363). That many of the early Manawaka settlers in Laurence's Canadian fiction emigrated to Canada as a result of the Highland "Clearances" of Northern Scotland in the 1800s suggests that Laurence perceives Canada as a country of dispossessed settlers and their descendants. That the identities of her primarily Celtic-Canadian and Métis characters in her Canadian fiction are based on their shared sense of dispossession rather than their allegiance to Britain exemplifies Laurence's belief in both early Canadian settlers and indigenous peoples as disinherited and ultimately colonized by Britain. Laurence identifies with Canadians whose ancestors were disinherited by Britain. She sees herself as different from the British, and she rejects an identity in Africa that is aligned with the British memsahib and colonialist.

To align Canadian settlers and their descendants with the dispossessed and colonized might be to efface the history of the colonization of indigenous Canadians. Laurence is a descendant herself of Scots ancestors who were disinherited from their country. The history of Laurence's people is therefore a history of the dispossessed; and yet, as Laurence is acutely aware, her ancestors were also invader-settlers who might have participated in the colonization of indigenous Canadians. Laurence's genealogical history is therefore ambiguous: it is a history of both the colonized and the colonizer, the dispossessed and the dispossessing. Laurence struggles to distinguish herself from British colonials by invoking her Canadian identity, even though, historically, white Canadian settlers were both the oppressor and the oppressed. Laurence's Canadian citizenship does not exempt her from genealogical ties to imperial practices or from her own entrenchment in imperial values. Her stance as a Canadian anti-imperialist is ultimately undercut by the imperial history of the white Canadian settler.

As Laurence explains in a letter to C.J. Martin (a friend from Somalia who supplied photos for *The Prophet's Camel Bell*), the memoir "is mainly an account of our own experiences, the difficulties of two North Americans faced for the first time with the necessity to communicate with people of an entirely different background, language, religion." Self-defining as "North American" in this letter, Laurence distinguishes herself from white Europeans in Africa. In *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, right from the outset of her journey, she foregrounds her identity not just as North American but more specifically as Canadian. In fact, she is only able to join her husband in Africa because he describes her to his employers as a Canadian and a woodswoman: "Jack explained carefully that his wife, being a hardy Canadian girl, was quite accustomed to life in a tent [...] the Colonial Office was convinced by the striking description Jack gave of me as an accomplished woodswoman, a kind of female Daniel Boone" (11).

Daniel Boone was an American pioneer, a kind of folk hero who wrote *The Adventures of Colonel Daniel Boone* in 1794. His travel narrative describes how he led settlers through the wilderness of the Cumberland Gap, and how he captured the Shawnee Indians and adopted Chief Black Fish as his son. Either Jack describes Laurence as a "female Daniel Boone," or Jack describes Laurence as a "woodswoman" and Laurence likens the description to Daniel Boone. Either way, the portrayal enables Laurence to travel to Africa with Jack. This point is intriguing if regarded in relation to Laurence's subject-position as a white Canadian woman in Africa. First, the comparison of Laurence with Daniel Boone suggests an alignment with the British imperialists in Africa: just as the British negotiated and ultimately conquered the wilderness and peoples of Africa, the comparison suggests, so North American pioneers negotiated and ultimately conquered the wilderness and peoples of North America. Second, the comparison dissociates Laurence from white women, and aligns her with white men: just as men negotiate and conquer the wilderness, the comparison implies, so too can Laurence. Finally, the comparison draws upon a preconceived conception of North American and African landscapes as wild and untamed. Unlike the British, the comparison subtly suggests, Canadian girls are "hardy" because they must negotiate the wilderness of Canada. Jack enables his wife to travel to Africa because his description of her connotes an imperialist, a man, and a Canadian who must survive "in the face of 'hostile elements and/ or natives'" (Atwood 32).

Paradoxically, the construction of Laurence as a female Daniel Boone, a figure who captures the American Indian, is also a construction of Laurence as a Canadian 'native.' As Johnson and Lawson point out, early settlers desired to be indigenous to the country they settled, creating a 'native' identity for themselves idealized in figures such as the Mountie, the pioneer, the woodsman. Laurence is constructed as a 'native'

Canadian woodswoman who replaces and elides the indigene. In the memoir, Laurence both plays into and resists her construction as a female Daniel Boone and a Canadian woodswoman. On the one hand, the reasons she gives for traveling to Africa are not so different from those of an explorer and adventurer such as Daniel Boone. In a statement that is quite overtly imperialist, Laurence says that she and Jack wish to discover and develop new lands, to construct roads "where none had been before" (11). On the other hand, she recognizes the absurdity of her construction as a Canadian woodswoman: "in fact, I had never camped in my life" (11). Laurence at once creates and undercuts the representation of herself as an imperialist adventurer and a 'native' Canadian "woodswoman." She plays into such a representation of herself, that is, at the same time that she reveals its fabrication. Laurence momentarily aligns herself with an explorer who "develop[s] new lands," but is not ultimately reducible to the figure of Boone with whom she is aligned. Laurence, as a woman and as a person, cannot be explained by those upon whom she and Jack draw to represent her.

Tellingly, Laurence also states that one of the reasons she and Jack travel to Africa to pave roads "where none had been before" may have been because they had a desire "to simplify, to return to the pioneer's uncomplicated struggle" (11). As we have seen, Laurence undercuts the stereotypical idea of the Canadian pioneer with her reference to Daniel Boone and her assertion that she had actually "never camped in [her] life" (11). Paradoxically, then, in this instance she expresses a sense of nostalgia and longing for that romanticized and even fabricated life of the Canadian pioneer. She at once recognizes her dissociation from that "hardy" life and desires to return to it. She wishes to experience life before Western development, even as she and Jack clearly participate in that very development. This nostalgia epitomizes what the anthropologist Renato Rosaldo terms "imperialist nostalgia," a longing for what people (and in particular colonialists) have themselves destroyed. In Rosaldo's words, "When the so-called civilizing process destabilizes forms of life, the agents of change experience transformations of other cultures as if they were personal losses." Rosaldo asserts that imperialist nostalgia problematically enables one to "establish one's innocence and at the same time talk about what one has destroyed" (108). Laurence indeed views herself as innocent at this early instance in the memoir, but, during her time in Africa, she comes to realize that she cannot completely exempt herself from imperialist practice.

The simultaneous desire to return to a 'simple' and 'uncomplicated' past and to engage in "progress" and development might seem contradictory. If read in relation to the logic of Western ideology, however, such a desire might not be as contradictory as it initially seems. As I explain in the first chapter of this dissertation, in *Tensions of Empire* (1997), Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler explain how Britain imagines and tells the history of the Industrial Revolution in terms of the Garden of Eden narrative. During the Industrial Revolution, Cooper and Stoler argue, the English perceived nature as that which was being lost; at the same time, the English perceived culture as the machines, mines and mills that were continually encroaching on the country and ousting nature. In this view, nature is that garden of Eden that is prior to culture and technology. It is that which is past, idealized, and can no longer be claimed. It is ultimately mythical and lies beyond the memorable past. It is no coincidence, Cooper and Stoler point out, that Britain was going through the Industrial Revolution at the same time that it was colonizing Africa. Although nature was lost in the service of technology, it could be redeemed in the kingdom of Africa. Africa was that garden of Eden to which humans could hope to return. Laurence's nostalgia for the 'simple' life replicates the British notion that Africa is the Garden of Eden that promises both simplicity and redemption.

That Laurence desires to return to that which is 'simple' and 'uncomplicated' suggests that she plays into the notion of Africa as uncivilized in relation to the West. After all, according to Western teleology, the Garden of Eden is that which existed before time. Robert Young, in *Colonial Desire* (1995), asserts that the concept of "savagery" was created as the antithesis of "civilization" (35). Anne McClintock, in *Imperial Leather* (1995), also analyzes how the West defines itself as progressive in juxtaposition to the so-called Third World, which it sees as archaic. Referring to Walter Benjamin's work, McClintock maintains that "the mapping of Progress depends on systematically inventing images of archaic time to identify what is historically new about the past" (358). Moreover, McClintock acknowledges that the archaic time that the West defines itself against is associated with the colonized and also with women. "The dynamics of colonial power," she deduces, "are fundamentally, though not solely, the dynamics of gender" (364).

How, then, are we to understand Laurence's gendered position in Africa? The notion that men and the West occupy the feminine and the colonized relates to the historical association of women with the material and men with the spiritual, an association I take up in the first chapter of this dissertation with reference to Judith Butler's *Bodies That Matter* (1993). In *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* Laurence seems to be more often aligned with that which is masculine and imperial. Jack's or Laurence's description of her as "a female Daniel Boone" implies that Laurence is like man who progresses forward through time, occupying and conquering space in his adventures. Laurence's own description of her reasons for traveling to Africa, as we have seen, also aligns her with the masculine: he who discovers and develops new lands. In addition, Laurence takes an authorial position in the memoir that necessarily determines her masculine position. As I have mentioned, the autobiographical genre, traditionally, is a masculine one. Laurence's various attempts to take on an anti-imperialist stance, to dissociate herself from the masculine and the imperial, often fail. Not only is she unable to resist the role of a Westerner, but she also cannot locate her anti-imperialism in her Canadian citizenship. Anglo-Canadian history, like British history, is caught up in imperial aims. In Africa, then, Laurence is often aligned that which is masculine and imperial, despite her own attempts to counter that alignment.

Laurence's association with the masculine and the imperial allows her a certain kind of freedom and privilege. Jack's description of Laurence as a "hardy Canadian girl," for example, allows Laurence to travel to Africa. That Laurence is permitted to travel to Africa is particularly interesting in light of Ann Laura Stoler's assertion that the dominant domestic arrangement of the colonies in the early twentieth century consisted of a colonized woman living with a European man. According to Stoler, because of the economic benefits of this arrangement (the fact that colonized women provided free domestic service, for example), colonial governments encouraged concubinage by "restricting the emigration of European women to the colonies and by refusing employment to married male European recruits" (348-49). Although many European women would have accompanied their husbands to the colonies during the time period when Laurence was in Africa, Laurence's account of Jack's description of her suggests that, in some ways, her status as a Canadian allows her to defy certain restrictions placed on European women. In particular, it permits her to travel to Africa with her husband at a time when many European women could not.

Despite Laurence's alignment with the masculine and the imperial, and despite the freedoms that alignment enables, Laurence still experiences gender oppression. Although she is part of the colonizing group as wife to Jack Laurence—a contributor to the development of the colony—her gender posits her as subordinate to colonizing men. As Jenny Sharpe asserts in *Allegories of Empire: the Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text* (1993), white women in the colonies were in "a dominant position of race and a subordinate one of gender" (12). Moreover, Laurence's gendered position as a woman in a British colony restricted the social spaces she could occupy. The imperialist women travelers that preceded her had a duty, in Ann Laura Stoler's words, to "closely surveil husbands, servants, and children," and that duty "profoundly affected the social space they occupied and the economic activities in which they could feasibly engage" (365).

Indeed, there are moments in *The Prophet's Camel Bell* when Laurence's gender status impedes her mobility and affects "the social space [she] occupie[s] and the economic activities in which [she] [...] feasibly engage[s]" (Stoler 365). As a white woman, for instance, Laurence is not supposed to go to the nearby Somali town, and she "unwittingly causes[s] a scandal" by doing so (34). In the memoir, Laurence explains that "European women[13] did not go to the Somali town alone, and no European ever went on foot. It simply wasn't done" (34). Her presence in the Somali town not only represents a gender transgression, but also a racial one; and her transgression of racial boundaries makes her realize that she is neither separate from the "Christian conquerors" the Somalis resent, nor "immune" from the Somalis' "bitterness" against them (34). Laurence's social mobility is also impeded when she associates with the Governor's wife. Laurence exclaims that, although she feels an affiliation with the Governor's wife, social etiquette requires that she not develop a friendship. When Laurence discovers that she and the Governor's wife share an interest in translating Somali poems and folk-tales, she states that she was about to invite her over to continue the discussion. "I recalled in time," Laurence explains, "that this was not possible. One does not ask the Governor's wife to drop over for a beer. This kind of formality, which prevents people from talking with one another, seemed idiotic to me then, and it still does" (257).

Laurence further experiences gender restrictions when she unknowingly commits a breach of etiquette by inviting African men into her house. When three Somali elders visit the Laurence home to question Jack about the construction of the ballehs, Laurence invites them in, even though Jack is not home. The men, Laurence notes, were "exceedingly polite [...] but made no attempt to ask questions or discuss the matter" (40). After the men leave, Laurence's interpreter and servant, Mohamed, informs her that "a woman alone in the house must never invite men in [...] to do so was a terrible breach of etiquette [...] the elders could certainly not discuss any serious matter with a woman" (41). As a white woman and the wife of the one who manages the imperial project of constructing ballehs, Laurence occupies a superior position in the imperial order. As a young woman and a foreigner in Somaliland, however, Laurence is inferior to the Somali elders with whom she converses. What is particularly interesting about this encounter is Laurence's initial ignorance with regard to her inferiority. She unwittingly positions herself as superior imperialist with whom the Somalis might discuss their grievances. At this moment, however, her gender position undercuts her alignment with the imperialist. The feminized gaze of imperial power is here troubled by existing gender hierarchies in Somaliland. Ironically, Laurence inadvertently situates herself as an imperialist, only to find that, at this moment, she does not occupy that position.

During the elders' second visit to the Laurence home, when Jack is at home, Laurence occupies the position of a silent bystander and listener as Jack converses with the Somali men. It is because Laurence here occupies neither Jack's position as a white, male imperialist, nor the Somalis' position as the ones whose land Jack develops, that she is effectively able to depict both sides of the conversation. On the one hand, she speaks through Jack's voice while distancing herself from his perspective: "How to deal with these three maddening old men?" (42). On the other hand, she imagines the Somalis' line of thought without having to position herself in opposition to it. When the elders ask Jack if the English will build large towns for themselves beside the ballehs, Jack suggests that the idea is absurd and says that the English would not live "permanently in the desert areas of the Haud for no reason at all" (42). Presenting the Somalis' side of the situation, however, Laurence says, "They [the elders] looked at him blankly. They could imagine it [the building of the towns] quite well. It would be no more insane than anything else the English did" (43). In this instance, Laurence stands outside of Jack's position as imperialist. Laurence's feminized gaze momentarily exempts her from imperial power and frees her to imagine and present a perspective outside of her subject-position as a white women in Africa. Laurence's gender position restricts her mobility, since she is not to invite the Somali elders in or converse with them on important issues;

paradoxically, however, it also gives her the freedom to situate herself outside of Jack's imperialist position.

While recalling her first encounter with the Somali men, when Jack is not at home, Laurence pokes fun at herself. She remembers how smug she feels after first meeting with the men, before she finds out that it was a breach of etiquette to have invited the men in: "*I handled that pretty well, I think; yes, I'm sure I did*" (40). As we will see in the next chapter of this dissertation, Laurence parodies Violet Nedden's position as an English queen who occupies her "rattan throne" in *The Tomorrow-Tamer* story, "The Rain Child." (112). In the same way, Laurence, in her first encounter with the Somali men, parodies her position as superior white woman who converses with the elders. While recalling the second encounter with the Somali men, when Jack is at home, Laurence portrays the men as exceptionally perceptive. The elders' suspicions with regard to English control of the ballehs, Laurence later reveals, were not unfounded: upon completion of the ballehs, Jack and other administrative officers agree that the ballehs must be patrolled by the English to prevent tribal war (254). Laurence is able, simultaneously, to mock her assumed superior position and portray the Somali men she meets with utmost respect. Laurence's encounters with the Somali men result in a questioning of her own perspective. Laurence comes to realize how caught up she and Jack are in the imperialist project: "We had assumed that the Somalis would naturally be pleased at a scheme to provide watering places in the desert. Now we saw that they were by no means convinced that the project was designed to help them" (44).

Laurence's social mobility is impeded both because of her race and because of her gender. If Laurence were either a European man or an African woman, then she could travel with ease to the market; if she were a white man, then she could invite the Governor or another white man over for a beer; and if she were either a European or an African man, then she could invite the Somali elders into her home. One might argue that Laurence's gendered position limits her social mobility and restricts her actions, while her racial position posits her as one with the conqueror, he who limits and restricts. But it is not simply so. Positions of race and gender work together in these instances to restrict and impede, and, in so doing, they maintain an imperial order. That a white woman is not to go to the local Somali town and market and that a white woman is not to invite African men into her home suggest a fear of miscegenation. I discuss such anxiety in the first chapter of this dissertation with reference to Robert J.C. Young's discussion of Victorian race theories. The prevention of a white woman from mingling with Africans in the marketplace is especially intriguing in light of Cheryl Johnson-Odim's suggestion, in "Actions Louder than Words: The Historical Task of Defining Feminist Consciousness in Colonial West Africa" (1998), that markets were "urban areas where the colonized and the colonizers (both women and men) intermingled regularly and were drawn into one another's world views" (81). According to the logic of imperialism, the "mingling" that a solitary white woman does in the marketplace could result in "degeneration." A white woman takes in "another's world [view]," a view that might challenge or undo the imperial order.

Because of Laurence's complex position of both subordination and domination in gender and race, and because of the disjunctions in culture between Laurence and the African people, Laurence's interactions with Somali women are some of the most intriguing moments in *The Prophet's Camel Bell*. It may be that Laurence's act of obscuring the cultural and historical differences between colonized Africans and Canadian women facilitates her identification with the Somali women she meets. Nevertheless, her identifications with Somali women are never straightforward, but, rather, fraught with complexity. As Barbara Pell explains in "The African and Canadian Heroines: From Bondage to Grace" (1997), Laurence "felt isolated from both the conventional 'memsahib' community and the native women in *purdah"* (38). Early in the memoir, some Somali women ask Laurence if she has any medicine to ease their menstrual pain, which is particularly bad, Laurence believes, due to the practice of clitorectomy. Laurence is uneasy and confesses that she does "not know what to say to these women" (75). Her assertion that "Women had always lived with pain" indicates an identification with the Somali women; yet her qualification of that assertion—"Why should it be any different?" (76)—demonstrates an unwillingness to help them and, thus, a dissociation from them. Furthermore, Laurence expresses a sense of frustration and futility at being unable to help the women, exemplifying a concern and sympathy for them: "What should I do? Give them a couple of five-grain aspirin? [...] the lunatic audacity of shoving a mild pill at their total situation was more than I could stomach" (76). Yet Laurence's act of ultimately turning away from the women—epitomized in her statement, "I have nothing to give you. Nothing" (76)—again emphasizes her cultural distance and dissociation from them.

By the time the women come to Laurence for help, Laurence has already, if inadvertently, established herself as a kind of medicine woman in the community. When an Illaloe[14] comes to her to help him with his ear ache, Laurence "ceremoniously" stirs a drop of Dettol and water and swabs his ear, and is stunned when she hears that his ear-ache is, in fact, cured (72-73). Like Daniel Boone, who captures the American Indian but also adopts and assumes a position as representative of that culture, Laurence here seems to perform African ritual as she "ceremoniously" stirs her medicine brew. Enacting Johnson and Lawson's theory, Laurence quite successfully assumes an indigenous identity as medicine woman. Importantly, however, when the Somali women come to her for help, she cannot maintain that indigenous identity. Laurence neither explores the cultural motivations for the practice of clitorectomy nor explains what she might mean by "[the Somali women's] total situation" (76). That she describes the women's menstrual pain as only part of their "total situation," however, and that she cannot "stomach" responding to it, suggest both that she believes that Somali women are oppressed ~~and~~ that she is repulsed by that oppression. That she feels distraught at her inability to help the women suggests that, at some level, she feels a duty to do so. Hence, in this instance, Laurence is not aligned with the indigene, but, rather, with white, Western feminists. Such feminists assume that they are less oppressed than their so-called Third World counterparts, and they assume that they have an imperial duty to "uplift" the colonized woman. Laurence seems to desire—but is frustrated because she cannot quite attain—a position outside of the imperial order, a position that would allow her, as a fellow human being, to reach across cultural and racial boundaries in order to aid the Somali woman.

The encounter between Laurence and the Somali women who ask her for medicine is affected by cultural disjunctions between Laurence and the women and also by Laurence's whiteness and the way that whiteness is perceived within an imperialist framework. The Somali women are affected by the imperial order, and, thus, involuntarily, by Victorian race theories, theories which state that "the pure origin of man was the white male—that universal mean and measure of all things" (Young 101). In *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, the women seem to view Laurence as representative of that superior "white male." They appear to view themselves as inferior to Laurence, since they come to her in shyness (75) and leave while hiding their faces in their clothes (76); they appear to view Laurence, as a white woman and a Westerner, as one who might have the "progressive" technological and medical answers to their problems. This encounter effects Laurence's realization that her role as medicine woman and Western do-gooder is limited: "It seemed to me that I had been like a child, playing doctor with candy pills, not knowing—not really knowing [...]. Had I needed their gratitude so much?" (74). It also demonstrates how violent and insidious the imperial enterprise is, since, as the Somali women's actions toward Laurence reveal, the ideology that white is superior here infiltrates the very minds of the colonized peoples themselves.

Laurence's meeting with the eight-year-old prostitute who lives in the nearby *jes*—a "tea-shop-cum-brothel" (156)—is as problematic as her earlier encounter with the Somali women. The rhetoric Laurence uses to describe her interactions with the child-prostitute, Asha, is remarkably similar to the rhetoric she uses to describe her interactions with the Somali women who ask her for medicine. Just as Laurence does not know how to respond to those Somali women, so she also does not know what to say to Asha: "We did not talk much, Asha and I, for I did not know what to say to her" (157). Laurence's description of Asha's "unkept" (157) appearance, and her observation that that such an appearance was "an unusual sight here, where children were normally well cared for" (157) indicates a sympathy and concern for the child. And yet her admission that she never asked much about Asha's life, and her justification of that inaction ("My knowledge of Somali was too limited, and who would I get to translate?" [157]) suggests a dissociation from the Somali girl. As Laurence sympathizes with and yet dissociates herself from the Somali women who ask her for medicine, so she sympathizes with and yet turns away from Asha. Furthermore, Laurence expresses the same frustration and futility in her inability to help Asha as she does in her inability to help the Somali women: the question she asks herself about her meetings with the Somali women—"What should I do?" (76)—is echoed in her statement regarding her interaction with Asha: "I did not know what to do" (156). Likewise, as Laurence reluctantly turns away from the Somali women with her statement, "I have nothing to give you. Nothing" (76), she also ultimately turns away from Asha: "So, whether out of wisdom or cowardice, I did nothing" (158).

Laurence's meetings with Asha seem to be even more troubling for Laurence than her interactions with the Somali women who ask her for medicine. Laurence explains that, in the evenings, the men from Jack's camp who work on the ballehs use the services of prostitution offered by the *jes* where Asha resides (156); Laurence also states that Jack decides to supply water for the *jes*, since it provides men from the camp with "amenities of one kind and another" (157). The use of the *jes* by members of their camp and Jack's decision to supply water to it suggest Laurence's unwilling complicity with the sustenance of the *jes* and Asha's situation. Importantly, Laurence cannot ignore that complicity (157). On the one hand, Laurence's decision not to act on Asha's behalf might imply an identification with the Somali girl. Perhaps it is because she sympathizes with her, in other words, that she cannot "stomach" (76) getting involved in her situation. On the other hand, however, Laurence's awareness of her complicity with the sustenance of the *jes* and Asha's plight forces her to recognize that she is at one with the imperialists. Her identification with Asha, that is, is cross-cut with her realization that she is complicit with her exploitation. Thus, it is at this moment that Laurence comes to realize the complexity of her own subject-position. As Laurence herself says later in the memoir, "This was something of an irony to me, to have started out in righteous disapproval of the empire-builders, and to have been forced at last to recognize that I, too, had been of that company" (251).

However, one cannot explain Laurence's inability to act on Asha's behalf with reference to empire alone. It is Laurence's position as a Westerner and her affiliation with the imperial enterprise of constructing the ballehs that debilitates her in her relationship with Asha. If she were to tell Jack's workers not to go to the *jes,* or if she were to tell Jack not to supply water to the *jes,* then Asha herself would suffer for lack of food and water. There is, then, nothing Laurence can do to remove Asha from her situation as child-prostitute and yet keep her from poverty, possibly even death. Yet Laurence's desire is not to align herself with empire, but, rather, to reach cross-cultural understanding. She asks, in her *Heart of a Stranger* essay, "Man of Our People," "Will we ever reach a point where it is no longer necessary to say Them and Us?" (166). In *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* Laurence, as a fellow human being, would prefer to help Asha, but is disturbed to find that her position as Westerner prevents her from doing so. Thus, Laurence's decision not to act on Asha's behalf is not a decision that simply aligns her with empire, but one that speaks to her humanity—her desire and yet inability to cross that boundary that divides "Them" from "Us," her desire and yet inability to work together with Others to overcome oppression and victimization.

In "Writing About Others: the African Stories" (1997), Gabrielle Collu suggests that Laurence has an "awareness of the limitations of her knowledge and perspective, as well as a very critical portrayal of herself as a young, naïve white liberal woman in Africa" (22). Similarly, in "(Mis)Speaking: Laurence Writes Africa" (1997), Mary Rimmer suggests that Laurence comes to express an "awareness that her own cultural framework determined what she saw and wrote of Africa" (16). Laurence's troubling interactions with the Somali women who ask her for medicine and her equally troubling interactions with the child-prostitute, Asha, attest to Collu's observation that Laurence portrays herself as a white woman in Africa critically and Rimmer's observation that she is aware of her own cultural position there.

However, while Laurence is aware and critical of herself as a white woman in a colonized country, her apparently stable subject-position as an Anglo-Canadian in Africa breaks down at moments of interaction with Somali women. Her feminist impetus that would help the Somali women by giving them medicine and that would aid Asha is impeded by her anti-imperialist motivation not to meddle in the Somalis' affairs. Just as Laurence must confront the history of her Scots-Canadian ancestors as those who were dispossessed of their own land but were also *colonizers themselves*, so she must confront the history of Western feminism as part of imperial progress. As Antoinette Burton explains, historically, empire "shaped the lives and identities of those who participated in the women's movement, making it a constituent part of modern British feminist identities" (4). As I explain in chapter one of this dissertation, first-wave feminism in Canada, like first-wave feminism in Britain, was also intertwined with imperialism.

Laurence is directly influenced by such feminism, and so her position, much to her own dismay, is embedded in imperialist values.

Historical interconnections between feminism and imperialism haunt Laurence when she encounters Asha. Literally, in what Mary Louise Pratt, in *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992), calls "the contact zone," that place on the imperial frontier where cultural ideologies clash, Laurence is debilitated at such moments of confrontation. Laurence comes to realize that Western feminism, since it relies on Western ideology, does not enable her to engage easily in cross-cultural interaction and understanding. She begins to realize that her own gender oppression is not the same as that of the Somali women she meets. Laurence comes to know, that is, as bell hooks puts it, that "the idea of 'common oppression' [between women of different cultures] was a false and corrupt platform disguising and mystifying the true nature of women's varied and complex social reality" (396). Ultimately, then, Laurence becomes uncomfortable with her own representation as a sympathetic and anti-imperialist woman as she comes to realize that she is nevertheless aligned with Empire. As Helen Buss puts it in "Reading Margaret Laurence's Life Writing" (2001), Laurence "cannot maintain her subject-position as respectful learner, good researcher, comic Westerner having her biases deconstructed by patient mentors" (40). Often in the memoir, Laurence is "bereft of strategies" (40).

The African Novel: *This Side Jordan*

Whereas *The Prophet's Camel Bell* is about Laurence's life in British Somaliland in 1951 and 1952, *This Side Jordan* is a work of fiction that takes as its subject the end of British colonial rule in the Gold Coast, where Laurence lived from 1952 to 1957.

Laurence's characters include both Africans and British colonials, and Laurence addresses how those characters cope with drastic changes to government rule, changes such as the introduction of "Africanization"—the policy by which British employees of the colonial government were replaced by African ones. In a CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) radio interview with Bill McNeil and Maria Barrett on December nineteenth, 1960, Laurence says that she was in Ghana during "tremendous social upheaval" and that it was "one of the most interesting times that one could have been in such a country." She further explains that the novel is primarily concerned with the African schoolteacher Nathaniel Amegbe, a character who "desperately wants to belong to the new Africa," even though "his family constantly tries to drag him back, into the tribal life, into the old ways [...] into a life in the village with the loyalty to the chief and the old gods." As Laurence puts it in the CBC interview, crossing over the river Jordan into the Promised Land—undergoing vast social and political change—is done with great effort and difficulty, "not just on the part of governments, but on the part of every individual within that country."

This Side Jordan takes up the lives of the married British characters, Johnnie and Miranda Kestoe, and the married Ghanian characters, Nathaniel and Aya Amegbe. Johnnie works for the British colonial government in Ghana, whereas Nathaniel is an underqualified teacher in a colonial school for local boys. By the end of the novel, because of Africanization, Johnnie must leave his post, and he and Miranda must return to England, while Nathaniel struggles to find his place in the new Ghana. The novel begins with Johnnie dancing the highlife with an African woman, Charity, and depicts the sexual tension between them. Johnnie, we find, is both attracted to and repulsed by women: he desires the African woman, Charity, and, later, the African prostitute, Emerald (1, 231); and, yet, he asks his pregnant wife, Miranda, to turn her back to him, so that she'll "look like [his] wife" (57), and he is haunted by the death of his mother by self-induced abortion (58). Miranda, much like Laurence herself, is a white liberal who seeks to value African culture and distinguishes herself from colonials who denigrate Africa, such as the British Helen and Bedford (119). Nathaniel is torn between village life, the life of his ancestors, and the new Africa, which includes "progress," development, and Westernization. Through all of these characters, Laurence explores Ghana's transition from a colony of Britain to an independent nation that continues to be developed and exploited by the West. Essentially, she critiques the imperial project and the patriarchy implicit within it, negotiating the conflicts between British colonials and local Ghanians during a time of simultaneous decolonization and development.

In *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* as I have argued in the first half of this chapter, Laurence both identifies with and yet dissociates herself from English imperialists and Somali women. In *This Side Jordan,* I maintain, Laurence employs imperial discourse and Western ideas of Africa even as she attempts to remain outside of them. In *The Invention of Africa* (1988), V.Y. Mudimbe discusses such imperial discourse: he explains how colonialism "signified a new historical form and the possibility of radically new types of discourses on African traditions and cultures" (1). These discourses set up various paradigmatic oppositions that include traditional versus modern and rural communities versus urban and industrialized civilization. Subsequently, much attention is given "to the evolution implied and promised by the passage from the former paradigms to the latter" (4). Mudimbe expands upon these insights in *The Idea of Africa*

(1994). While addressing the ways in which African discourses have been silenced by such Western paradigms, Mudimbe suggests that such Western paradigms make only certain types of discursive practices possible (xvi). In both of his studies Mudimbe relays how Western interpreters and African analysts alike are caught up in this Western discourse: they "have been using categories and conceptual systems which depend on a Western epistemological order" (*Invention* x, *Idea* xv).

Like other Western interpreters, Laurence somewhat inadvertently relies on conceptual frameworks of Africa invented by the West. Mudimbe's observations about such configurations of Africa are therefore important to a study of Laurence's African novel. Much of *This Side Jordan,* in fact, discusses the struggle between the old and the new: the traditional, African ways and the modern, Western ones; an "underdeveloped" Africa struggling against a "civilized" and "developed" West. To this effect, Laurence works within the imperialist discourse and the Western paradigmatic oppositions Mudimbe describes. In *This Side Jordan,* one of the ways in which Laurence juxtaposes the traditional ways and the modern ones, the "underdeveloped" and the "developed," is through configurations of rural and city life. According to W.H. New in his article entitled "Margaret Laurence and the City" (2001), cities in Laurence's writing "are variously signs of power, signs of social alternatives […] and embodiments of energy and imperfections, aspiration and decay" (60). I agree with New that cities are often sites of power and that they encompass aspiration for some and decay for others. I would also argue that, in her African writing, Laurence most often associates the city with progress, the future, and the West. By contrast, she configures the rural, like the indigenous

African, as the site of the traditional and the atavistic. According to McClintock's theory, it is that which is permanently anterior in time and place.

Early in *This Side Jordan*, the character of James, an English colonial who has lived in Africa longer than the other characters, reveals his racist notions about indigenous Africans in the country and the city: "the bush African is all right. If his belly's full, that's all he's worried about. But when they move to the cities—look at them! They get cheeky as the devil" (7). Laurence's character, James, problematically believes that the African belongs in the country and should not occupy the "civilized" space of the city. Laurence critiques such colonial perspectives by presenting them through that character. More interestingly, Nathaniel Amegbe feels torn between his past, rural life, and his present, city life. As Jane Leney puts it in "Prospero and Caliban in Laurence's African Fiction" (1980), "an opposition between city and country is clearly established; the dilemma for Nathaniel is to decide between remaining in the city as a schoolteacher or returning to his bush village to work for a chief" (70).

The British school at which Nathaniel teaches seems to be a physical manifestation of the very dilemma of which Leney speaks. The school is located in the city, named "Futura Academy," and painted with the slogan, "The Future is Yours," suggesting that it embodies progress. Yet it educates rural rather than city boys, and its physical appearance starkly contrasts with its name: "it sagged, buckled, rotted and decayed a little more each year" (16). Simultaneously an embodiment of the city and the rural, the progressive and the regressive, the school speaks Nathaniel's twofold position as one who lives a new life in the city and yet struggles with the memory of life in the past and in the country with his people. The school is also an ironic statement on the

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promise of empire. It is at once the mark of future progress and the failure of that progress. As British, the school is representative of empire. Tellingly, however, it does not embody positive economic progression, but exemplifies empire's inevitable violence toward and decay of local Ghanian culture.

One of the most intriguing examples of how Laurence contrasts Nathaniel's present city life as a teacher with his past rural life occurs when Nathaniel converses with his uncle, Abjei. When Nathaniel explains to his uncle that he does not want to live in the country to become a chief, he simultaneously rejects the rural life, associating it with the past, and aligns himself with the city life, associating it with progress: "They [our ancestors] are dead, dead, dead, and we are alive. Our future does not lie with them, or with the living chiefs, [...]. I am a city man" (103). In this instance, Laurence juxtaposes Nathaniel's perception of himself as a "city man" who embraces his "future" with his perception of his uncle as a rural man of the past who embraces his "dead" ancestors. The conversation between Nathaniel and his uncle about his present and his past exemplifies Anne McClintock's assertion that, during colonialism, "European *culture* (the civilizing mission) became ironically necessary to reproduce *nature* (the 'natural' divisions of domestic labor)" (*Imperial*, 36); the conversation between Nathaniel and his uncle also exemplifies how the idea of progress—"'nature' improving itself through time"—was crucial to maintaining that reproduction of nature (*Imperial*, 36). In other words, by aligning the city with "European culture" and the country with "nature," Laurence unwittingly demonstrates how European culture reproduces and maintains "nature" in the name of progress. This notion recalls Frederick Cooper's and Ann Laura Stoler's notion, in *Tensions of Empire* (1997), which I discuss earlier in this chapter. According to

Cooper and Stoler, during the Industrial Revolution, the English viewed nature as that which was being lost in the service of technology, as that which was opposite and prior to progress and development. With the character of Nathaniel, the author draws upon the Western notion of the binary opposition that contrasts the "progressive" city with the "regressive" rural African.

Even as Nathaniel aligns himself with the city, however, he feels somewhat estranged from that city and the notion of progress it embodies. Laurence places Nathaniel's discussion with Abdei, for instance, alongside Nathaniel's inner monologue. In that inner monologue Nathaniel says to himself, "You have forgotten your own land. You live in the city of strangers [...] and strange speech is in your mouth" (104). While Nathaniel earlier states that his ancestors are "dead, dead, dead" (103), here, in his inner monologue, the ancestral voices come back, as if to haunt him. Nathaniel here indicates that he feels a strong attachment to rural life and the past and that his life in the city betrays that past. Moreover, in the same inner monologue, he says, "The forest grows in me, now, this year and the next, until I die. The forest grows in me" (104). Nathaniel directly associates himself with the rural landscape of Africa; and with the phrase "this year and the next, until I die," he also suggests that there is an ongoing, perhaps even timeless, quality to the rural African landscape that he configures as a part of himself. Nathaniel's twofold position—as one who is both progressive and modern and tied to what is old and traditional—might be compared to Laurence's own twofold position as she represents it in *The Prophet's Camel Bell.* Nathaniel is both modern and traditional, Westernized and African, just as Laurence in her memoir is both Daniel Boone, a Western and imperial adventurer, and a woman who sympathizes with and attempts to align herself with the women in the villages she visits. In both works, Laurence creates a figure who is estranged from and yet tied to the past: a past that is, as we will see, essentially a part of the self.

Laurence reveals her perception of the rural African landscape as that which is anterior in time in Nathaniel's statement later in the novel that the city "isn't my home, this city of new ways, this tomorrow. You know where I belong. The village— back there, far back" (227). Whereas the phrase "this city of new ways, this tomorrow" depicts the city as progressive, the phrase that describes the country, "back there, far back," suggests that the rural village is backward. As we can see, then, Laurence depicts the Western oppositional paradigm of which Mudimbe speaks—between the progressive city and the regressive rural African community, the modern and the traditional. Moreover, she posits Nathaniel as one who belongs in that regressive community: speaking to himself in his inner monologue, Nathaniel says, "You know where I belong. The village" (227). And by doing so, she implicitly separates the African people from the progressive West. Thus, she inadvertently demonstrates once again how the idea of progress, moving forward away from that anterior time, is necessary to maintaining the notion that the rural African community is naturally inferior in place and time.

For Nathaniel, a return to his rural community would also be a return to the domestic, a coming back to his family, his uncle Abdei, and his ancestors: the colonial space of the African landscape is also a domesticated space. Laurence therefore works within the Western trope that depicts the colonized as the domesticated, for, as McClintock explains of British imperialism, "as domestic space became racialized, colonial space became domesticated" (*Imperial*, 36). Just as Laurence implicitly associates the rural African with that which occupies the space of the "natural" African landscape and anterior time, then, so she associates the rural African with the domestic and the familial. According to the imperial order, the city is "progressive" and the rural is "regressive," while, paradoxically, the rural is also that which is domesticated, tamed, and familial. The colonized, in this framework, like women, are confined to their proper place: the rural, the domestic. McClintock suggests that, "History is [...] figured as *familial*, while the family as an institution is seen as beyond history" (*Imperial,* 39). That "the family as an institution is seen as beyond history" is evident in *This Side Jordan* in the discussion between Nathaniel and his uncle about coming home to his family in the countryside—"back there, far back" (227). That "History is [...] figured as *familial*," that it is, in other words, "naturalized as an evolving family" (*Imperial,* 39), might be evident at the end of the novel when the African characters Nathaniel and his wife Aya, as well as the English characters Johnnie and his wife Miranda, have children, thus continuing the presence of both the indigenous and the English in Africa.

To posit the city as progressive, Westernized, and modern and the rural as traditional, even backward, is to reinforce the two categories which—as Karin Barber points out in the introduction to *Readings in African Popular Culture* (1997)—"have dominated the study of African cultures" (1). Barber explains that Westernized African art is assumed to have grown out of the traditional, "as if the traditional gives birth to, and is automatically superseded by, the modern, Westernized, elite forms" (1). The traditional is thus "frozen into place as an origin or influence, which is co-opted to authenticate the modern by providing it with roots" (Barber 1). What is problematic about such a binary is that it obscures "the cultural activities, procedures, and products of the majority of people in present-day Africa" (Barber 1). According to Barber, "There is a vast domain of cultural production which cannot be classified as either 'traditional' or 'elite,' as 'oral' or 'literate,' as 'indigenous' or 'Western' in inspiration, because it straddles and dissolves these contradictions" (2). In *This Side Jordan*, the city does not only represent Western progress in opposition to rural Africa, but is, rather, a place where abject subjects in the excluded zones of "after empire" contest that very opposition. While the construction of the city is an act of violence by the colonizer toward the colonized, colonized subjects can speak back to empire and play out contradictions between "traditional" and "modern" within that very space of the city.

As we have seen, Laurence somewhat problematically reiterates the binary between the urban and the rural in Nathaniel's conflict between becoming a "city man" (103) and listening to the ancestral voices which call him back home, to village life. However, right from the beginning of the novel, Laurence also shows how the city "straddles and dissolves" (Barber 2) the contradictions between Western and African traditions. When Johnnie dances the highlife with the African woman, Charity, for example, Laurence describes the nightclub where they dance as inclusive of "the wealthy and the struggling, the owners of chauffeur-driven Jaguars and the riders of bicycles" (2). She also explains that "Into the brash contemporary patterns of this Africa's fabric were woven symbols old as the sun-king" (2). Within the city of Accra where the nightclub resides, one can hear the "old rhythms [...] amid the taxi horns" (2). The school where Nathaniel teaches, like the nightclub where Johnnie and Charity dance, might also be read as a place where colonized subjects, such as Nathaniel, play out contradictions between "traditional" and "modern." As neither one nor the other, the British school is at once a violence against rural, African life and, as "buckled," "rotted," and "decayed" (16), a speaking back to the empire that created it. Thus, even though Laurence works within the Western framework that describes the city as progressive and Western, the rural as backward and African, she also demonstrates that this binary opposition cannot be maintained. *This Side Jordan* shows how colonized subjects, as part of the very city that violates them, have the agency to work within it in order to contest those Western values it sets forth.

In *This Side Jordan,* the maternal, the familial, and the domestic are all associated with the African landscape. The river Jordan that Nathaniel must symbolically cross is a "womb" (247), the land of his ancestors a "forest" (248). The configuration of the rural African landscape as domestic space raises questions about gender and how it might be configured in *This Side Jordan.* Does the colonial understanding of the rural African landscape as a domestic, familial space imply that that space is also gendered? If so, how is that understanding of the African landscape manifested in Laurence's African novel? What might it imply about Laurence's subject-position in relation to Western discourses about Africa? By creating a character such as Nathaniel, an African character who associates himself with the rural landscape, nature, and that which is anterior in time, Laurence conflates the African with the landscape he inhabits, the indigene with nature. By associating Nathaniel and his land with the domestic and the familial, Laurence also feminizes Africans and Africa. In so doing, she reproduces Western imperial ideology. Historically, as Peter Hulme points out, "Land is named as female as a passive counterpart to the massive thrust of male technology" (quoted in McClintock *Imperial,* 26). Furthermore, as McClintock explains in her analysis of a drawing of colonial

America by Jan van der Straet in 1575, the landscape in that drawing paradoxically represents the land as both passive and dangerous, threatening to the male settlers that seek to "tame" it. "The gendering of America" in that drawing, she suggests, "is simultaneously naked and passive *and* riotously violent and cannibalistic" (27).

Particularly interesting here are the similarities between the ways in which the West has understood colonial moments in both Africa and America. Just as Africa has been understood historically as "heathen" and "savage" in narratives such as Richard Burton's *First Steps in East Africa* (1856), so pre-contact America has been understood as the same. Importantly, however, the ideology that conflates the land with the indigene is not only an imperial ideology but also a Canadian one. In *Survival* (1972), Margaret Atwood argues that the landscape of Canada as depicted in art and literature is abundant, threatening, uninviting. That "threatening" landscape is both confused with the indigene and described as feminine. To put it in Eva Mackey's words, "the settler viewpoint of nature—not as 'noble' but as '*ignoble* savage'—plays a key role in defining Canadianness" (45). The Canadian landscape is understood as a dangerous, threatening female, "even a *vagina dentata* (toothed vagina)" (Mackey 47).

In Laurence's *This Side Jordan,* then, the author's conflation of African characters with the landscape they inhabit exposes Laurence's unwitting cultural alignment with both imperial and Canadian values. Such conflation also reveals Canada's complicity in an imperial project that attempts to subdue that which it constructs as both Native and female. As in *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* Laurence cannot disentangle herself from Western imperial and patriarchal values as she depicts Africans and Africa in her work. While Laurence creates an African character who searches for an identity, who is caught between the traditions of his past and the Western values of his future, she works within imperial values that construct Africans as traditional. By doing so, she also repeats a Canadian imperial ideology that has historically constructed the Native as at one with a specifically feminized landscape. But Laurence's African novel expresses Canadian imperial ideology not only in her association of Nathaniel with the African landscape, but also in Nathaniel's ambivalent relationship to his history. As I explain in chapter one of this dissertation, Gunilla Florby argues, in *The Margin Speaks: A Study of Margaret Laurence and Robert Kroetsch from a Post-Colonial Point of View* (1997), that Canadians are severed from their collective histories because they deny indigenous histories and their own complicity in the displacement of the indigene. Florby addresses how Laurence understands one's dissociation from history in part because of her own African experiences. "Even if the search for identity in an invader society must be different from that in a settler society," Florby asserts, "Laurence's exploration of rootlessness in *This Side Jordan* seems to have been a prelude to similar examinations in the Manawaka works which were to follow" (149). This analysis implies that Laurence associates the African with the white Canadian settler in Canada, for both are dissociated from their histories. Thus, Laurence again repeats imperial and Anglo-Canadian ideology: she conflates the indigene with the land that white settlers assert themselves against; and she depicts those white settlers as 'native' themselves. Thus, she at once dissociates herself—as one who is tied historically to white settlers—from the indigene and the landscape and makes herself and the indigene one. Both the indigenous African and the white Canadian, Laurence implies, share an uncomfortable and disconcerting severing from their past.

In *This Side Jordan,* Nathaniel describes his home in the country as both feminine and maternal: with his statement, "the River would lap him [Nathaniel] around with its softness, the brown murky stillness of its womb" (100), he suggests that the river in the countryside is his original home, his *mother's womb*; with his question, "How many times have I cut the cord that fed me?" (100), he implies that this original homeland is both a woman and a mother who provides him with nurturing. The rural African space that Nathaniel depicts is therefore not only a domestic space but also a feminine and maternal one. Thus, an attempt to separate himself from the rural African landscape that is his home, is also, in Stephanie Demetrakopoulos's words, an attempt "to fight his way clear of a devouring mother in the form of his people and the African mother/ river who call him back to his village" (45).

In "Laurence's Fiction: A Revisioning of Feminine Archetypes" (1982), Demetrakopoulos suggests that, in *This Side Jordan*, "both male protagonists are driven away from and out of their pasts by fear of certain faces of the feminine" (45). Demetrakopoulos's reading is particularly interesting when one realizes that those "faces of the feminine" are also configured as faces of Africa. Alongside Nathaniel's negotiation of the rural African village, then, is Johnnie's negotiation of Africa and his representation of that continent as feminine: Nathaniel conceptualizes Africa as a feminine and maternal homeland, just as Johnnie perceives Africa as distinctly feminine. Perhaps the most explicit example of such a perception of Africa occurs when Johnnie has sexual intercourse with the African prostitute, Emerald. His encounter with Emerald demonstrates Johnnie's view of her as the continent of Africa and himself as the colonialist: "She was a continent and he an invader, wanting both to possess and to destroy" (231). Johnnie's encounter with the African woman also exemplifies McClintock's notion that "The myth of the virgin land is also the myth of the empty land, involving both a gender and a racial dispossession" (30). In addition, Johnnie's encounter with Emerald seems to demonstrate what Eva Mackey calls a "Western 'will to power'" (4). Citing Homi Bhabha, Mackey explains that "dominant power and political supremacy seek to '*obliterate*' difference" (4). Johnnie's understanding of Emerald in *This Side Jordan* is one that "destroy[s]" (231) and therefore negates or obliterates the African woman's difference. In other words, rather than understanding Emerald as a person who might have complex and interesting similarities to and differences from himself, he views her as Other to himself, as that which he is not.

Just as Western patriarchal narratives depict the continent of Africa as empty, "passively awaiting the thrusting, male insemination of history, language and reason" (McClintock, *Imperial* 30), so Johnnie describes the African woman he encounters as, "quite simply, a virgin" (231). Just as Western discourse depicts colonized land as vacant, so Emerald's face is "expressionless," and her body, "beautiful and young" as it is, is "blank" (231). And just as Western discourse posits the African land and the indigenous people that inhabit it as passive and backward, so Johnnie sees Emerald as bereft of agency. Johnnie's assertion that "She might as well have been drugged, lying there, or dead" (231) implies that the African woman is bereft of agency; his indication that Emerald does not speak the civilized language of English ["She did not speak English, not even pidgin English" (230)] suggests that she is primitive. As Wendy Roy asserts, "patriarchy merges with imperialist brutality" in this instance when Johnnie "sexually brutalizes [the] inexperienced prostitute" (50).[15]

Yet it is the character of Johnnie Kestoe, rather than Laurence herself, who perceives the continent of Africa as a woman who is to be conquered and possessed. It is quite probable, in fact, as Abena Busia suggests in "Silencing Sycorax: On African Colonial Discourse and the Unvoiced Female" (1989), that Laurence depicts the encounter between Johnnie and Emerald as an encounter between a conqueror and a continent in order to dramatize and satirize "the patriarchal nature of the imperial venture" (91-92). However, in light of McClintock's assertion that "the myth of the virgin land is also the myth of the empty land" (30), I would disagree with Busia's assertion that Laurence calls the trope of woman as African continent into question by "making the woman a frightened silenced virgin [and infibulated], rather than, as is more common, a whore" (91-92). If Laurence calls that trope into question, then she does so by working within and against it in a more complex and detailed way. As I explain in my discussion of McClintock's analysis of the drawing of colonial America, landscape is often represented in colonial art as both passive and dangerous: "The gendering of America" in that drawing is both "naked and passive *and* riotously violent and cannibalistic" (27). In the same way, Western colonial and imperial representations of women can be as both "virgin" and "whore." The land and woman alike are conflated and come to represent that which is wild and in need of taming, but also that which is empty or void.

I would like to suggest, then, that, with the encounter between Johnnie and Emerald, Laurence does not directly challenge the metaphorical linking of woman and African continent, but rather works within that trope to show how woman and Africa cannot be known or possessed. Johnnie's expectations of the African prostitute, for example, are not met, but rather continually undermined: when he expects her to speak English, he is surprised to find out that she does not ["Johnnie was startled, then he understood. She did not speak English" (230)]; while he expects that she is an experienced prostitute, he also soon finds that she is not ["It was then that he discovered the fantastic truth [...]. She was, quite simply, a virgin" (231)]; and while he expects her body to be familiar to him as a woman's body, he again finds that it is not, since after their sexual encounter he sees by her bleeding that he has torn her clitorectomy (233). As Johnnie attempts to perceive Emerald through the confines of his own cultural frame of reference, he finds that she does not fit that frame of reference; and as he attempts to possess and know her, he finds that she continually slips from his grasp. Thus, while Johnnie perceives himself as the conqueror and Emerald as the conquered, he also comes to realize that the feminized Africa he negotiates cannot be easily defined or possessed.

From one perspective, Johnnie's perception of woman and Africa as that which cannot be known or possessed works within Western patriarchal narratives that would define both woman and the colonized as mysterious and exotic. From another perspective, however, it suggests that the Western patriarchal discourses that define colonized people within certain conceptual systems are not absolute. Not only might they be refused, but, as Judith Butler puts it in "Gender is Burning: Questions of Appropriation and Subversion" (1997), they might also "be ruptured, forced into a rearticulation that calls into question the monotheistic force of its own unilateral operation" (382). If inadvertently, Emerald still challenges Johnnie's perception of her as a whore by revealing that she is a virgin, and she also challenges his perception of her by showing that her language and her body are not familiar to him. In this way, Emerald might be said to "rupture" the "monotheistic force" of Johnnie's Western perceptions.

In addition, the "beating of the drums" to which Laurence refers throughout the novel might metaphorically suggest a "rupture" of the "monotheistic force" of Western discourse. The drums, which Laurence associates with that which is African, constantly sound "in the distance," and they are old and traditional: "These were the old drums" (56). They are also a force that Johnnie cannot ignore: "'Blasted drums,' Johnnie said irritably. 'They never stop'" (57). And further, they seem to represent the hope and the heart of the Africans: "The drums pulsed this hope, as they had pulsed the hope and despair of a thousand years, here, in this place" (247). While working within the trope that would define the Africans and the drums they play as ancient and timeless, Laurence uses that trope to suggest that the drums, the hope and heart of Africa, are consistent in their threat to disrupt what is Western and modern. With her depictions of Emerald and the drums of Africa, then, Laurence suggests that the colonized continually refuse the Western narratives that attempt to define them.

Laurence constructs the character of Johnnie Kestoe in order to demonstrate how imperial and patriarchal discourses conflate what is feminine with what is African. Thus, Laurence's subject-position as a white woman writing about Africa is not the same as the subject-position of a white man writing about Africa. Unlike Johnnie, and unlike colonialist men in Africa, Laurence is able to sympathize with African characters precisely because of the Western feminization of Africans and the African landscape in which they reside.

To emphasize, as Laurence does, Johnnie's unwitting association between what is African and what is feminine is to emphasize such an association in Western and patriarchal discourse. In Western discourse, as theorists such as V.Y. Mudimbe, Anne McClintock, and others, assert, African women have often been associated with the material, the earthly, the past, and the African landscape itself. Judith Butler's impetus to rethink materiality as an effect of power is particularly relevant in relation to such Western discourse. The West has repeatedly constructed and thus sedimented the idea that the masculine is spiritual and that the feminine is material. The material is precisely what the supposedly spiritual masculine subject excludes in order to be. In Butler's words, "This exclusionary matrix by which subjects are formed [...] requires the simultaneous production of a domain of abject beings, those who are not yet 'subjects,' but who form the constitutive outside to the domain of the subject" (*Bodies That Matter,* 3). The feminine, the maternal, the material, the past, and the African landscape are precisely these "constitutive outside[s]" to which Butler refers.

Such forces that the character of Johnnie as a masculine subject rejects might be thought of as the "abject," a concept that has been understood in various ways by feminist and psychoanalytic theorists. Julia Kristeva, the first to discuss the concept of the "abject" in a sustained, theoretical way, defines it as "what culture, the *sacred* must purge, separate and banish so that it may establish itself as such in the universal logic of catharsis" (317). Elizabeth Grosz, drawing on Kristeva's notion of the abject, defines it as that which falls away from bodies in order for them to enter a social and ordered world (*Volatile Bodies,* 192). Both of these theorists ascribe to the abject specifically feminine connotations and associate it with feminine bodily fluids such as menstrual blood. For

McClintock, the abject is "everything that the subject seeks to expunge in order to become social" and it is also " a symptom of failure of this ambition" (71). McClintock emphasizes the idea that what is rejected neither leaves nor stays put. Like the African drums that continue to disturb Johnnie in Laurence's African novel, the abject, for McClintock, "haunts the edges of the subject's identity with the threat of disruption or even dissolution" (71).

What is particularly interesting about McClintock's discussion of the abject in relation to *This Side Jordan* is the way in which McClintock extends the notion of the abject from that which an *individual* must purge in order to enter the social world to that which a *collective* must purge in order to enter a social world. She demonstrates how the abject relates to both individual and collective identities and how it therefore stands on the threshold between "body" and "body politic" (72). Although she is not the first to do so, since Kristeva and others also discuss the abject in relation to collectives, her reading is unique in that it addresses the abject as it applies to imperial history. Speaking of the history of imperialism, McClintock argues that "Abject peoples are those whom industrial imperialism rejects but cannot do without: slaves, prostitutes, the colonized, domestic workers, the insane, the unemployed, and so on" (72). Moreover, she not only speaks of abject peoples, but also of abject zones: "the Israeli Occupied Territories, prisons, battered women's shelters" (72). McClintock's insistence that the abject may be collective rather than just individual emphasizes the historical and material conditions of imperialism: she forces an acknowledgement of those groups that imperialism elides. She also foregrounds the abject as both feminized and racialized. The abject is commonly associated with the feminine, and her examples of abject peoples are primarily made of women and the colonized.

With regard to Laurence's novel, as critics such as Roy have pointed out (52), Johnnie's encounter with Emerald brings back the memory of his mother's death. The coming together of these two moments culminate in abjection. Laurence's description of Johnnie's encounter with Emerald is remarkably similar to her description of Johnnie's witnessing of his mother's death: Johnnie does not do anything for Emerald but cover her with a cloth, just as Johnnie's father does not do anything for Johnnie's mother: he does not call a priest or a doctor in time. Johnnie cannot understand what Emerald says because she only speaks Twi, just as Johnnie cannot recount to the priest what his mother said on her deathbed; and when Johnnie looks at Emerald after their sexual encounter, he sees "A clot of blood on a dirty quilt" (232), just as, when he discovers that his mother has died of an abortion, he feels that it is nothing "more than a clot of blood on a dirty quilt" (59). Moreover, when Johnnie sees Emerald's blood and closes his eyes, he notes that "the sight was momentarily blotted out, but not the memory" (232); the "memory" to which he refers is not only the immediate memory of Emerald's blood but also the old memory of his mother's death. At this moment, Johnnie's confrontation with Emerald—that which represents Africa itself—is simultaneously a confrontation of his own personal past. At the same time, it is a confrontation of the feminine, the bodily, and the maternal. As we have seen, feminist theorists associate the abject with women's bodily fluids. Julia Kristeva defines it as "that which culture must purge" (317), and Anne McClintock defines it as "everything that the subject seeks to expunge in order to become social" (71). Thus, Johnnie confronts the abject when he confronts Emerald's bleeding and the memory of the "clot of blood." (59). McClintock's explanation of the abject as that which neither leaves nor stays put is particularly relevant to Johnnie's experience, since the memory of his mother's death keeps coming back, haunting the boundaries of his masculine subject-demarcation.

Throughout *This Side Jordan,* Johnnie repudiates that which is feminine and maternal: "Turn over [...] with your back to me," he says to avoid acknowledging the pregnancy of his wife (57). And yet in the encounter with Emerald, as much as he resists facing Emerald, he is at once forced to acknowledge the African, his past, the feminine, and the maternal. In feminist and psychoanalytic terms, we might say that Johnnie finally faces what he has abjected. By abjecting the African, the past, the feminine, and the maternal, Johnnie asserts his European identity and his identity as a masculine subject; by acknowledging that which he has abjected, Johnnie may qualify that absolute European and masculine identity. And yet, if he does acknowledge what he has abjected, he does not acknowledge it completely. While he may make peace with his past by naming his child after his mother at the end of the novel, he still does not want to dwell on the significance of that name: "Reasons could be dragged up, no doubt [...] but he did not want to see them" (267). Hence, as Rimmer points out, "Johnnie seems still caught in but unwilling to confront the uneasiness of his own past" (14).

In her essay, "A Place to Stand On," Laurence discusses how much of her own writing is "an attempt to assimilate the past, partly in order to be freed from it, partly in order to try to understand [herself]" (*Heart,* 14). She also maintains that writing "involves an attempt to understand one's background and one's past, sometimes even a more distant past which one has not personally experienced" (13). As the characters of Nathaniel and Johnnie in *This Side Jordan* negotiate their pasts, often configured in the novel as Africa itself, so Laurence herself negotiates her past and Africa in the writing of the novel. While Laurence perceives her own writing as that which confronts a personal history, she also sees it as that which confronts a collective, "more distant" history. In many ways, then, her writing about Africa, that which she and other Westerners configure as "anterior in time," might be a way to acknowledge and accept that personal and collective past. Likewise, her writing about an Africa that she not only views as traditional and timeless, but also as feminine, might be a way to address and acknowledge that femininity. With such associations of Africa, Laurence plays into notions of Africa that Mudimbe articulates, notions of Africa that Appiah delineates (such as the idea that Africa is a single, homogenous entity), and notions of Africa as "heathen, savage," or what civilization is not. She thus repeats ideas asserted by the Pan-Africanist movement and outlined by Alexander Crummell and W.E.B. Du Bois. Laurence, then, writes an African memoir and African novel that are both personal and public, individual and collective. Her African works confront a self that is feminine at the same time that they conflate that self with the African places in which she resides.

Although Laurence necessarily works within Western paradigms of Africa, then, she importantly foregrounds the feminine within them. In the African memoir, Laurence's feminized gaze of imperial power is troubled by existing gender hierarchy in Somaliland: Laurence finds that, as a woman, she does not occupy the place of an imperialist in her conversation with the Somali elders in her home. This displacement allows Laurence to portray Jack's and the Somali elders' positions while dissociating herself from Jack's imperialist position. In the African novel, Laurence is able to portray the colonialist figure of Johnnie Kestoe as one who repudiates what is African and what is feminine, while simultaneously critiquing that imperial and patriarchal position. Contrary to many critics, then, I would argue that conceptions of the feminine are central to Laurence's African writing. Yet perhaps more important is Laurence's ambivalent subject-position in the Africa she negotiates. As we have seen, her memoir reveals how she comes to realize that she is often—but not always—of the same company as the imperialists, even as she sometimes identifies with the colonized women. Her African novel shows how she draws upon Western tropes of Africa even as she struggles to refute them. Clearly, in both African works Laurence seems to confront Africa as she comes to know herself. Perhaps it is this confrontation of the past, the feminine, and the self that causes her to be "drawn to distant lands" and to "realize [her] own reasons for preferring to live abroad" (unpublished letter to Jack McClelland).

Chapter Three

Toward Cross-Cultural Understanding: Margaret Laurence's Africa in *The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories*

This chapter examines how Margaret Laurence's collection of African short stories entitled *The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories* (1963) works toward cross-cultural understanding during a time of decolonization and increasing global development. I argue that the stories in this collection do not simply posit Western imperialist values against traditional African ones, but, rather, relay a complex and dynamic relationship between them. The stories are set in the Gold Coast immediately prior to its constitution as the independent nation of Ghana in 1957, and they address that nation's struggle toward independence. Importantly, however, Laurence does not only depict the struggle toward freedom. She also exemplifies her anti-imperialist and feminist stance precisely through her depiction of the ways in which African and Western traditions and cultures come together and the ways in which peoples come to dominate or be dominated by others. *The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories* presents Africa through the lived experience and imagination of a Western, anti-imperialist, and feminist woman.

Critics have regarded *The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories* as a single collection. The stories, however, were originally published separately in such journals as *Queen's Quarterly* and *The Tamerack Review.* In this chapter I examine only three stories in the collection: "The Pure Diamond Man," "The Drummer of All the World," and "The Rain Child." I choose these three stories in particular because they are so different from one another, and yet they all exemplify how Laurence works within and against Western representations of Africa, imperialist and feminist discourses. With the exception of W.H. New's article, "The Other and I: the African Stories" (1977), and Karen E. MacFarlane's "'A Place to Stand On': (Post)colonial Identity in *The Diviners* and "The Rain Child" (2003), the individual stories have not been addressed in comprehensive detail by Laurence scholars. These African stories, however, are among Laurence's best, and it is for this reason that I endeavor to give detailed analyses of them and to draw out in them Laurence's pertinent anti-imperialist and feminist values.

"The Pure Diamond Man"

In "The Pure Diamond Man," as in many of the stories in *The Tomorrow-Tamer,* Laurence challenges Western notions of Africa and strives to present her readers with alternate representations of Africa. She reveals how understandings of Africa are not essential but determined through a history of Western discourses on Africa that has become dominant and understood as truth. As I have discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation, V.Y. Mudimbe asserts that the West cannot speak of Africa outside of a Western epistemological framework, and he explains how Western discourse sets up oppositional paradigms through which the West understands that continent. While the West represents the "rational," "progress," "civilization," and "advancement," Africa, in opposition to that West, comes to represent the "irrational," "mysterious," or that which is backward in time, that which is "savage." In his study, *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (1992), Kwame Anthony Appiah further emphasizes Mudimbe's point. Referring to African philosophies established after colonization, such as Pan-Africanism and Negritude, he suggests that, even within Africa itself, discourses about that continent are entangled within Western ideologies. Any discussion of Africa, it would seem, is to some extent influenced by an "idea" of Africa invented by the West. As Appiah puts it, the invention of Africa was largely an outgrowth of European racialism.[16]

The Pan-Africanist movement, which sought to establish solidarity amongst native Africans, was a direct influence on Laurence and her work. Kwame Nkrumah became the main exponent of pan-Africanism in the 1950s and 1960s, when Laurence was living in the Gold Coast. Nkrumah wanted to secure a strong voice for Africans in the Gold Coast, and he eventually formed the Gold Coast Convention People's Party, became Ghana's first Prime Minister, and led the Gold Coast to independence in 1957. Laurence clearly indicates that she was a supporter of Nkrumah in a letter to Adele Wiseman dated the first of December, 1952: "The country is well on its way to self-government, having a Prime Minister (Kwame Nkrumah, who seems a very intelligent and sincere young man [...] the country has a good leader in him, I think)" (77). Like the movement of Pan-Africanism and the figure of Kwame Nkrumah who supported it, Laurence too, as I have demonstrated in the previous chapter, is caught up in Western values, even as she fights against them. In "The Pure Diamond Man," through the African protagonist, Tetteh, and his interactions with the would-be English anthropologist, Philip Hardacre, Laurence not only challenges Western representations of Africa, but also presents the problem of holding and practicing both African and Western values. In addition, Laurence demonstrates, through the character of Tetteh, how the colonized undermine the work and the ideology of the colonizers. She shows how the colonized "speak back" to the empire that inscribes them.

"The Pure Diamond Man" begins with a conversation between two Ghanaian men: Tetteh, and Daniel [a "big newspaper man" (185)] in a local pub. Tetteh describes himself to Daniel as "Luck's very boy" (182), and relays to Daniel his story about how he dupes an Englishman, Philip Hardacre, into believing in an African ceremony he falsifies and sells to him. Although the ceremony is interrupted and revealed to be false by the local minister, Reverend Timothy Quarshie, Tetteh remains "luck's very boy" (182), since he ultimately finds a way to market a Ghanaian foot remedy to Westerners. The story of "The Pure Diamond Man" is the story that Tetteh relays to Daniel. The title of the story refers to Tetteh, who is a "diamond man" because he makes "cash" (185) by faking and selling African traditions. It also refers to Hardacre, who is a "diamond man" because he buys such traditions—both literally and ideologically—and because he has a family history of diamond mining in Ghana. Tetteh's act of duping Hardacre is an act of resistance against empire. It is an instance in which the colonized use a hoax to take back the "diamonds" or "cash" that the colonizers continue to exploit in Africa. Laurence has a strong sense of how the colonized work within Western and imperial ideologies in order to contest them, and she demonstrates this contestation through the example of Tetteh in "The Pure Diamond Man."

In "The Pure Diamond Man," Tetteh attempts to dupe Philip Hardacre into believing Tetteh's carefully staged act. Tetteh charges Hardacre a fee to witness a traditional African python ceremony conducted by a fetish priest. The false ceremony involves the sacrifice of a cockerel, some "drummings" and "magic sayings," and the calling of African pythons (195). In order to conduct the staged ceremony, Tetteh takes

Hardacre to his home village where he gets his father to play the role of fetish priest and his brother to play the role of the priest's helper.

According to Western anthropology in the 1950s, fetishes were objects, often wood carvings, that were believed to have magical or spiritual powers. They were associated with animistic religious practices. Fetish priests, by this same anthropological account, were religious leaders who performed such practices. The Enlightenment mind, as McClintock puts it, "was felt to have transcended fetish worship and could look indulgently upon those still enchanted by the magical powers of 'sticks and stones'" (227). However, as McClintock also points out, "a decidedly fetishistic faith in the magical powers of the commodity underpinned much of the colonial civilizing mission" (227). In other words, historically, the West denigrated African rituals as "fetishistic," while denying that they engaged in fetishism themselves. Colonials, for example, misunderstanding African fetishes, both feared them and sought to destroy them; and, yet, those same colonials "were prone to fits of murderous temper" when Africans did not pay respect to their own fetishised objects, namely, "flags, crowns, maps, clocks, guns, and soaps" (McClintock 230). In the Western mind, such colonial objects, like African fetishes, are thought to have great power: the flag and the crown, for example, stand for that which is much larger and more powerful that what they are in and of themselves. In "The Pure Diamond Man," Laurence both presents and undermines the Western notion of the African fetish and the fetish priest as those which must be feared and destroyed. Through the character of Tetteh, as we will see, she deconstructs and parodies the Western construction of the fetish as such.

Throughout the staged ceremony, Tetteh shows Africa and Africans as Hardacre would wish to see them, as they have been constructed, that is, by the West. When Hardacre questions Tetteh about the African ceremony he performs, Tetteh does not answer directly, but emphasizes mystery and leaves interpretation of the event to Hardacre: "'What's the significance of the leaves, Tetteh?' 'Magical medicine,' Tetteh said sternly. 'Do not touch please. Special for the Gods of this house'" (193). Tetteh here plays into the preconceived notion that Africa is mysterious, a notion that is exemplified in such works as Henry Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885) and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902). Further, in his performance for Hardacre, Tetteh invokes the Western notion of African as savage. For the sake of the performance, Tetteh dresses his brother Kwame in a leopard skin. When Kwame appears in front of Hardacre, he consolidates Hardacre's notion of the African as heathen by "[brandishing] his machete, newly-sharpened, within a few inches of Hardacre's face" (193). Thus, with his fabricated performance, Tetteh confirms the Englishman's preconceived ideas about Africa, his belief that Africa is mysterious—"Your ancient culture had a weird magnificence about it" (187)—and that African traditions are savage, exemplifying a "terrifying splendour" (187). Hardacre's use of the words "magnificence" and "splendour," moreover, bespeaks a kind of exoticism, an excess of Otherness that Tetteh, ironically, confirms.

With the ceremony that Tetteh performs for Hardacre, Laurence not only invokes but ultimately undermines the idea that Africa is mysterious and savage. When Hardacre examines the fetish figures Tetteh uses for the ceremony, he says, "Intriguing. Where did you get them, Tetteh?," and Tetteh replies, "Secret Place [...]. Perhaps later I will be telling you" (195). Yet, when Tetteh's father, who has converted to Christianity, worries about having fetishes in his home, Tetteh informs him that fetishes are sold "like baskets of ground-nuts in the city market" (195). Tetteh suggests to Hardacre that the fetish holds power and mystery, while revealing to his father that the fetishes are cheap and plentiful market commodities. The African fetishes, and, by extension, Africa itself, are clearly not mysterious and unknowable as Hardacre believes them to be.[17]

Laurence further challenges Western representations of Africa by invoking and undermining the idea that Africa is primitive in relation to a progressive or civilized West. Both Robert Young and Anne McClintock discuss this idea of Africa as primitive in their studies *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race* (1995) and *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (1995) respectively. As I note in chapter one, Young explains how ideas about race in Victorian anthropology centered around two antithetical positions: the "progressivist," Enlightenment view and the "degenerationist" view. Crummell's and Du Bois's Pan-Africanism would have been influenced by the "progressivist view," since they still viewed Africa as "heathen" and believed in Africa adopting Christianity. McClintock asserts that Victorian ideologies maintained that "colonized people [...] do not inhabit history proper but exist in a permanently anterior time [...] as anachronistic humans, atavistic, irrational, bereft of human agency—the living embodiment of the archaic 'primitive'" (30). Again, as McClintock asserts, according to British ideologies that continue throughout the Victorian age and beyond, Africans are deemed backward in relation to an ever-advancing West.

Tetteh sets out to consolidate Hardacre's view that Africa is primitive as he sets out to consolidate his view of Africa as mysterious and savage. In order to confirm this notion, Tetteh takes Hardacre to the village via an old road which is no longer in use. The old road plays into Hardacre's ideas about Africa as undeveloped, since it has "Fallen into the river. Grown over with vines and mangrove" (189-90). Laurence undermines the idea that Africa is undeveloped, that it is an "empty land" (McClintock 30), by contrasting that road with the new one. Far from primitive, the new road hosts lorries with "several dozen" passengers who wear "nylon shirts" and sit "amid the sacks of sugar and crates of yellow soap" (189). The road leads not to the bush but to a crowded marketplace. Furthermore, Tetteh constructs his own home as a primitive African hut for the English Hardacre, but in order to do so, he must remove objects that reveal worldly influence and Christian values: a "basin of Japanese manufacture [...], three china saucers with the cups missing, embellished with Biblical scenes," and so on (191). Laurence relays how African villages are not primitive but possess worldly objects and are highly influenced by and embedded within values of the Western world.

In "The Pure Diamond Man," Laurence shows how Western and African traditions come to be inseparable in Ghanaian villages during the 1950s. In this way, she demonstrates Karin Barber's point, in her introduction to *Readings in African Popular Culture* (1997), that "There is a vast domain of cultural production which cannot be classified as either 'traditional' or 'elite,' as 'oral' or 'literate,' as 'indigenous' or 'Western' in inspiration, because it straddles and dissolves these contradictions" (2). Tetteh's family members have converted to Christianity, but they still know African religions. Tetteh's father, as I have mentioned, worries about having the fetishes in their home, suggesting that he still has some respect for the religions of which they are a part. Particularly noteworthy is Tetteh's statement that fetishes are sold by the dozens in the local marketplace. On the one hand, as mentioned, with Tetteh's statement, Laurence undermines the Western idea that the fetish is that which is mysterious and all-powerful. On the other hand, the statement also suggests that African villages have imported the system of capitalism, a system that profits from selling fetishes to tourists as symbols of traditional African religion. English products such as sugar and "yellow soap" are brought into the village from the city in the lorry in which Tetteh travels (189). With the importing of soap, the British not only bring their products but also their ideologies into rural Ghana.

In her analysis of the Pears' Soap campaign, McClintock explains how that company sought to "[brighten] the dark corners of the earth" by "teaching the virtues of cleanliness" (Pears' Soap Ad quoted in McClintock 32). McClintock explains that, according to Pears' Soap ads in the late nineteenth-century, this domestic commodity, soap, "purifies and preserves the white male body from contamination in the threshold zone of empire" (32). Laurence's brief mention of the importing of "yellow soap" (189) into a Ghanaian village, then, is a subtle indication that the Ghanaians have adopted the British notion that one must clean, purify, and lighten the skin. Laurence seems to suggest that the nation is certainly not free from British ideologies, even though it is approaching independence from Britain. Local Ghanaians negotiate traditional values with British ones as items like sugar and soap continue to infiltrate rural Africa along with the ideologies they bring with them.

Particularly interestingly is the commodification of African fetish objects in "The Pure Diamond Man." As mentioned, Tetteh notes to his father that the wood carving fetishes he uses in the faked ceremony have not had anything "said over them," but are, rather, cheap commodities (195). Tetteh therefore rejects the Western notion that the fetishes are mysterious and powerful; and, yet, by defining them as "commodities," he plays into—and subtly mocks—the Western fetishization of the commodity itself. Although colonizers do not recognize it as such, the commodity, as McClintock points out, is certainly a fetishized object for the colonialist and Westerner (228-30). Thus, Tetteh's presentation of the wood carvings to the English Hardacre as mysterious fetishes and his subsequent comment to his father that the carvings are actually cheap commodities are enactments of an elaborate resistance to the English Hardacre and the empire he represents.

Tetteh's hoodwinking of Hardacre into believing the efficacy of the fetishes undermines the self-acclaimed superiority of Hardacre and the colonizers for which he stands. With his hoax on Hardacre, that is, Tetteh resists the Enlightenment notion that the West has "transcended fetish worship" (McClintock 227). He shows that Hardacre believes in this Enlightenment notion while exposing its falsity. To re-situate the wood carvings of the fake ceremony as a Western commodity fetish, rather than an African fetish, is to turn the Enlightenment notion that the West has "transcended fetish worship" on its head. Tetteh suggests that it is not the Africans who are "still enchanted by the magical powers of 'sticks and stones'" (McClintock 227), but, rather, the colonizers themselves. Although not understood by the colonizers as such, Tetteh uses "mimicry, appropriation, and re-evaluation" (McClintock *Imperial Leather*, 229) to resist and to demonstrate the absurdity of Hardacre's colonialist position.

The "yellow soap" that is brought into rural Ghana, then, not only shows how Western ideology infiltrates rural Ghana, bringing "lightness" to "darkest Africa." It also shows, subtly, how soap functions as a commodity fetish for the colonizer. Colonizers, through advertisements like the Pears' Soap campaign, believe that soap cleans and lightens the black body literally and metaphorically. Such a belief not only reveals the racism implicit within the colonial enterprise, but also suggests that the colonizers fetishize that "yellow soap" (189): that is, they attribute to it what they perceive as extraordinary, even magical, powers. The mention of the bringing of the soap to rural Ghana on the lorry, then, again turns the notion that colonizers have "transcended fetish worship" on its head (McClintock 227). Laurence, through Tetteh, again subtly implies that colonizers unwittingly engage in fetish worship while pompously and ignorantly deeming themselves superior to it.

The Reverend Timothy Quarshie's intrusion into Tetteh's staged ceremony ironically furthers Tetteh's strategic act of denying the oppressor the true knowledge of things and fooling Hardacre into believing in his assumed position of superiority. In the middle of the ceremony, "a voice like a judgment roared outside the hut [...]. Kwaame stood paralyzed, listening to the deep and god-like voice" (197). Quarshie then enters the hut, sees the ceremony, and reveals to Hardacre that Tetteh's family is Christian. In response, Tetteh's father admits to Hardacre and Quarshie that the ceremony is staged. After Quarshie interrupts and exposes the fabrication of the ceremony, he offers to bring Hardacre to the village's true fetish priest, Bonsu, on the condition that he donate a bell for the village church. The exposure of the false ceremony does not set straight Hardacre's preconceived notions of Africa, but reinforces them. Hardacre, according to the Western ideals to which he subscribes, must go even deeper into the heart of Africa in order to find the mystery at its centre. Although it is the Reverend, not Tetteh, who gains the "cash" (ironically in the form of a church bell) from Hardacre in this instance, Tetteh still succeeds in tricking Hardacre into believing in his own Western ideals, ultimately playing into and yet mocking the Western idea that Africa is mysterious at its core.

The story continually points to the cross-cultural fertilization that occurs between the British and the Africans. As we have seen, Tetteh must remove all of his family's worldly goods from their hut in order to stage a traditional ceremony; and the Reverend Timothy Quarshie uses the local fetish priest's foot remedy. Interestingly, Tetteh also easily reconciles his country's desire to be free of the West with Western products and the system of capitalism that produces those products. On his hat he wears button pins, one that proclaims the cry of his country, "Freedom and Justice," and another that advertises "Amarylis Light Ale" (184). In this instance, Laurence demonstrates how an African cry for freedom and a Western capitalist advertisement co-exist in the most unlikely of places, button pins on an local Ghanaian's hat. Through figures such as Tetteh, she shows how Western and African goods and ideologies uncannily exist alongside one another.

In light of the story's emphasis on cross-cultural fertilization in Ghana, and in light of the fact that fetishes are discussed at Tetteh's staged python ceremony, it is worth noting that, as Anne McClintock explains in *Imperial Leather,* the fetish itself is not solely a traditional African phenomenon that occurred before contact with Europe.

Laurence works against the idea that African traditions are absolutely separate from Western ones in this story, exemplifying how the two are, in 1950s Ghana, intimately intertwined. McClintock's explanation of the fetish as that which came into being at the point of contact between African and European cultures during early colonization supports Laurence's view. Tracing the history of the fetish, McClintock explains that, during the 1880s, "the discourse on fetishism moved from anthropology and the study of religion [...] into psychoanalysis" (189). In Laurence's story, the fetish is associated with anthropology, since the would-be anthropologist Hardacre desires knowledge of it, and it is also associated with religion, since it is posited as opposite to Christianity when the Reverend enters the ceremony where fetishes are present.

More importantly, perhaps, as McClintock notes, during colonialism the fetish embodied a contradiction in the value systems between Christians and Africans (186). It became the symbolic ground or problem object "on which the riddle of value could be negotiated and contested" (187). This is clearly the case in "The Pure Diamond Man." Both that which holds powers Tetteh has forgotten (197) and that which is sold "like baskets of ground nuts in the city market," the fetish at once holds religious and monetary value. It resides on an uneasy borderline between deity and market commodity. While Laurence does not directly refer to the psychoanalytic association of the fetish in the story, Freud's theories on the fetish would have been relatively well-known in the 1950s and 1960s, when Laurence was writing "The Pure Diamond Man." We might read this story, in fact, as a subtle challenge to Freud's notion of the fetish, since Laurence draws attention to its anthropological and colonial history—a history Freud elides by positing the fetish as a delusion[18] and displacing it from the realm of colonization to the realm of the bourgeois European family in the nineteenth century.

Through the figure of Hardacre, Laurence critiques the notably Western discipline of anthropology in "The Pure Diamond Man." As Fiona Sparrow has pointed out in her study of Laurence's African writing, *Into Africa With Margaret Laurence* (1992), before Laurence traveled to Africa, Laurence thoroughly researched anthropological texts such as B.W. Andrzejewski's and R.S. Rattray's studies of Somali and Ashanti cultures. But what Sparrow does not discuss is how Laurence critiques anthropology through fictional characters such as the would-be-anthropologist Philip Hardacre. In *Subject to Colonialism: African Self-Fashioning and the Colonial Library* (2001), Gaurev Desai explains that James R. Hooker's 1963 essay, "The Anthropologist's Frontier: The Last Phase of African Exploitation," was one of the very first to argue that anthropologists came to Africa after World War I as "the handmaidens of colonial governments" (63). Subsequently, Desai asserts, scholars such as Jacques Maquet in "Objectivity in Anthropology" (1964), also began to assert that the discipline of anthropology was not neutral but was caught up in the values practiced by colonialists. "The Pure Diamond Man," as we have seen, demonstrates how Hardacre, by way of Tetteh's hoax on him, can only see Africa as it has been constructed for him by the West. Ultimately, then, Laurence—who published this story in the same year that Hooker published his essay—cleverly anticipates both Hooker's and Maquet's studies. To view the Western anthropologist's relationship with Africans as one of true understanding, Laurence suggests, is to misconstrue that relationship.[19]

Laurence sets up and undermines Western constructions of Africa in this story, and she debunks the idea that African traditions are absolutely separate from Western practices during the 1950s. Moreover, she shows how African traditions and Western ones come together, as is evident in Quarshie’s adaptation of the fetish priest’s cure for corns. Significant to this coming together of African and Western ways is the fact that the story is framed by another: Tetteh sits in a bar in the city and tells Daniel, a “big newspaper man” (185), of his attempt to dupe Hardacre. The story he tells to Daniel is the story of his interactions with Hardacre. “The Pure Diamond Man” opens with a direct contrast between the scientific Western ways held by Daniel and the supposedly superstitious Ghanaian ways held by Tetteh: “‘One year ago, when I was young,’ said Tetteh, “‘I was always thinking I am Luck’s very boy.’” Daniel smiled. ‘Scientifically, you realize, a consistently lucky person is an impossibility’” (182). Daniel here ridicules Tetteh, but it is Tetteh who ultimately comes out on top by adapting to Western capitalism. He will market Bonsu’s foot cure, mocking and yet profiting from the Western notion that African remedies have mysterious and magical properties. He will have luck and success by putting a market value on an African fetish, appropriating an African remedy and subjugating it to the Western capitalist system.

As John Eustace puts it in “African Interests: White Liberalism and Resistance in Margaret Laurence’s ‘Pure Diamond Man,’” we have “a fairly strong decolonizing gesture in Tetteh, who [. . .] seems to challenge Western discourses by demonstrating how they mediate Africa to serve their own interests” (24). Tetteh indeed exposes Western notions of Africa through his trick-playing on Hardacre, and he also makes the coming together of Western and African ways work to his own benefit by marketing Bonsu’s foot remedy. Yet Tetteh's triumph, I would argue, is not absolute. The subtle mentioning of Daniel as a "big newspaper man" is important, for it is Daniel to whom Tetteh relays his story. Daniel parallels the Western reader, one who holds scientific values and might be skeptical about Tetteh's "luck." As a "big newspaper man," Daniel also reports such stories to the outside world. He is highly influenced by scientific values and Western ways, and so his report of Tetteh's story will most likely be biased and influenced by Western ideology. Laurence frames "The Pure Diamond Man" within the story of Daniel and Tetteh, a story which makes one wonder if the final word—the word that is communicated to so many through the newspaper—will not be one laden with Western biases. At the same time, however, the audience to which Tetteh tells his story—Daniel, and, by extension, African and Western readers themselves—might be likened to the English Hardacre around whom Tetteh's story revolves. Thus, with the framing of one story within another, Laurence leaves us wondering whether we, like Hardacre, might be duped by Tetteh's story. Tetteh's strategic act of hoodwinking Hardacre and the framing of that story within another draw attention to the inefficacy of Western representations. Through the character of Tetteh, Laurence ultimately challenges the West's assumption that Africans are non-thinking beings and shows how Africans act to resist empire.

"The Drummer of All the World"

"The Drummer of All the World" is a story about Matthew, an English boy who is the son of a missionary in Ghana. Matthew's father is quite explicitly imperialist in that he is determined to convert local Ghanaians to Christianity and therefore attempts to dominate through ideology. Matthew's mother also supports the missionary cause, "thumping the decayed hand-organ in the little mud church, chalking up the week's attendance, so many black souls for Jesus" (2). Matthew himself, however, does not support his father's imperialist and missionary endeavors. Instead, he makes friends with the African boy Kwabena, listens to the African drummers until he "knew the drummer was hypnotized with the sound" (7), and becomes immersed in the Ghanaian culture in which he resides. Matthew narrates the story from the point of view of a man who looks back upon his childhood. He grows up in Ghana, moves to England in his teens, returns for a visit when he is seventeen and again to work for the government ten years later. When Matthew tells his story, "Africanization"[20] is occurring in Ghana, and so Matthew is about to leave his government post and return to England. As we discover through Matthew's story, each time he returns to Africa, he realizes how Africa has changed and at once mourns for the old Africa and his lost childhood. What he comes to realize, ultimately, is what Laurence realized when she lived in Africa. As Laurence herself puts it in *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, "This was something of an irony to me, to have started out in righteous disapproval of the empire-builders, and to have been forced at last to recognize that I, too, had been of that company" (251).

In "Race, Empire, and the Historians," Christopher Fyfe states that "Drawing on the mythology of Africa as (in Hegel's words) 'the land of childhood,' whites could, without compunction, treat Africans as children" (21-22). Such is the case with Matthew's father in "The Drummer of All the World," who says to his wife, "Remember, they're like children, these people" (5). Matthew's father works to dominate the Africans through violence and proselytizing for his Christian ideology. His violence manifests itself when he "beat six boys [in his mission school] in a single afternoon," and his domination through both violence and ideology occurs when he breaks the idols in the fetish huts (4). He also critiques the Catholics in the village for teaching Latin by rote, but he himself makes his missionary boys play hymns "until their mouths were sore" (4). Matthew's father appears much like a nineteenth century colonial administrator that Fyfe describes as "a father figure (from the mother country) among his 'children' [who] sees his career as a career of service to them" (22). For Matthew's father, that "service" is laden with violence. As in "The Pure Diamond Man," however, Laurence makes it clear that Western domination is not necessarily the final word. In a kind of mockery of the power of the written word and English discourse, "a green fur of mould grew over everything, *especially over my father's precious books*, irritating him to the point of desperation" (1 my emphasis). The missionary's word does not stand up to the forces of Africa: the mould that is living Africa quite literally overtakes that word. In such instances, Laurence exposes a breakdown in the attempted domination of Africa by imperialists and missionaries such as Matthew's father.

More interesting than Laurence's direct critique of imperialism through Matthew's father is her implicit critique of it through both Matthew and his African friend Kwabena. When Matthew returns to Africa when he is twenty-seven, he finds himself in a tense conversation about politics with Kwabena. Matthew expresses to Kwabena his disdain for the new Africa: "'Independence is the new fetish, and political parties the new chieftains. I'm not sure that much is gained'" (17). On the one hand, with this comment, Matthew makes an insightful point regarding decolonizing Ghana: while Britain has officially pulled out, Western imperialism continues in various guises and forms. On the other hand, by indicating his dislike for Western influence on Africa—"independence" rather than "fetishes," "political parties" rather than "chieftains"—Matthew implies that Africa should remain unchanged, ahistorical, static, in a position of "Other" to the progressive West. As Renato Rosaldo puts it in "Imperialist Nostalgia," "In this ideologically constructed world of ongoing progressive change, putatively static savage societies become a stable reference point for defining (the felicitous progress of) civilized identity" (108).

Reading Matthew's statement as one that posits Africa as primitive, Kwabena naturally takes offence: "'So---' Kwabena said thoughtfully. 'You would like us to remain forever living in thatch huts, pounding our drums and telling pretty stories about big spiders'" (17). On the one hand, as his reaction reveals, Kwabena has rejected his heritage, fully embracing Western ideals. As a child he wanted to be a fetish priest, but now he now wants to be a Western-style doctor (15). On the other hand, the tone of his statement of reaction suggests that Kwabena acknowledges the idea that to remain in the old world is to remain in it as it is constructed by the West. It is the West, Kwabena implies, that has created an image of Africans as "forever living in thatch huts," "pounding drums," and "telling pretty stories about big spiders" (17). This tense political conversation between Matthew and Kwabena is also informed by the racial and class differences between them, differences of which Matthew becomes increasingly aware. As Gabrielle Collu puts it in "Writing About Others: the African Stories" (1997), "[Matthew's] life, his experience, his expectations, his opportunities are different from those of Africans in Africa because of the colour of his skin and the privileges that are associated with it" (23). It is only later in life that Matthew thinks about the fact that Kwabena was the son of their cook and his wife and that Kwabena "shared [his] mother with [Matthew] in exchange for [his] cast-off khaki shorts" (16).

Matthew and Kwabena's conversation reveals an impasse to which there seems to be no way out. Matthew's view is caught within the notion that Africans are primitive, static, ahistorical, whereas Kwabena's view tends to reject his own history and culture in favour of Western ways. Such an impasse is one that continues to be discussed among African philosophers. In "Reason, Modernity and the African Crisis" (2002), Simon Gikandi discusses the postmodernist philosopher Mbembe and the modernist philosophers Hountondji and Gyekye. While these philosophers differ on what Gikandi calls "the African crisis"—a crisis of representing and understanding decolonizing Africa—they all believe that "there is an urgent need to rethink how African worlds have been represented and interpreted" (155). According to Gikandi, "Mbembe rejects modes of representation and interpretation that depend on the autonomy of reason" (156). He rejects reason precisely because it is posited as that which is embodied and practiced by the West. Rather than accommodate Western practice, Mbembe would occupy that position of Otherness, that which is Other to reason, the rational, the civilized. Yet he would also resist Western practice by refusing to replicate Otherness as it has been determined by the West. Like Trinh T. Minh-Ha, he would argue that "Otherness becomes empowerment, critical difference, when it is not given but re-created" (418). Houtondji and Gyekye, on the other hand, believe that "the African crisis arises from the failure of rational organization and self-reflection to take root in African thought and practices" (156). They believe that African philosophy must appeal to reason, must dislocate itself from the position of "Otherness" that the West and reason gives it.

Matthew's and Kwabena's opposing views reflect the philosophers Gikandi discusses. Matthew, like Mbembe, seems to be opposed to accommodating Western reason; Kwabena, like Houtondji and Gyekye, embraces reason and Western values in order to oust Africans from the position of Otherness given to them in Western discourse. Matthew's position in particular, however, is somewhat problematic. He laments Western influence on Africa, but when he hears that Kwabena wants to be a doctor, he also states that he "wanted to tell [Kwabena] that I knew how far he had traveled from the palm hut. But [. . .] did not dare" (15). Matthew paradoxically desires Africa to be free of British ways while still believing that to embrace those British ways—to become a doctor rather than a "ju-ju man" (15)—is to show "how far" one has come. He does not dare to say as much to Kwabena, perhaps because he is somewhat aware of his own problematic assumption that the West is more advanced than is Africa.

As Achille Mbembe explains in "African Modes of Self-Writing" (2002), "dominant African discourses on the self developed within a racist paradigm" (256). Such discourses, he further notes, "draw their fundamental categories from the myths they claim to oppose and reproduce their dichotomies: the racial difference between black and white; the cultural confrontation between civilized peoples and savages" (257). Referring to Mudimbe's work, Mbembe argues that to assert that Africa is invented by the West is to maintain that "Africa exists only on the basis of a preexisting library, one that intervenes and insinuates itself everywhere, even in the discourse that claims to refute it" (257). The problem with which Mbembe is concerned is the problem of delineating an African "self" outside of that Western epistemological framework that insidiously informs it.

In "The Drummer of All the World," Kwabena's subject-position is one that is formed by the violent colonial discourse of which Mbembe speaks. That Kwabena adopts Western views that value "civilization" over "savagery," "progress" over "tradition," suggests that he is caught up in Western values, values upheld by those English colonizers whom he believes should leave Africa (11). Thus, the violence of colonialism, Laurence implies, is not only a violence of physical suffering, but also a violence of language and ideology. Western epistemological values become so dominant and consecrated as truth that there is, seemingly, no way out. Such ideology, to use Mbembe's words, "insinuates itself everywhere, even in the discourse that claims to refute it" (257). And yet, interestingly, the violent result of the colonial enterprise often slips outside the reason of empire. Clearly, Africa and Africans are not reducible to the colonial discourse that seemingly subscribes them. As is demonstrated in the figure of Tetteh in "The Pure Diamond Man," for example, colonized subjects speak back to empire through those colonial values within which they reside. As is demonstrated in the figure of Kwabena in "The Drummer of All the World," there is a "suffering" that Matthew, but not Kwabena, will never know. Kwabena's subject-position is formed by—but ultimately exceeds and is not reducible to—the colonial discourses that inscribe him.

At moments, Matthew is quite explicitly aligned with imperialist values even as he claims to be anti-imperialist and rejects his father's values outright. In one instance, Matthew explains how he goes into the village with Kwabena and sees the body of a dead child:

> I was shown a girl child who had died of malaria, the belly bloated, the limbs twisted with the fever. And what interested me most was that they had left her

> gold earrings on. Avariciously, I longed to steal those thin bright circles before they were wasted in the earth. (7)

Matthew unwittingly turns his back on the suffering he sees—"the belly bloated, the limbs twisted with fever"—in favour of focusing on the possible fortune in the girl's jewelry. Just as British imperialists exploit diamonds and gold in Africa, so Matthew wishes to exploit the "gold earrings" that would be, in the language of an imperialist, "wasted in the earth." In another instance, Matthew directs Kwabena away from the African girl, Afua, so that he may have her for himself. He says that doing so was "something totally strange to me" (10), implying that he performs this subtle yet covetous act almost against his will. As I mention in chapter one, according to Ann Laura Stoler in "Making Empire Respectable" (1997), colonial governments encouraged European men to take colonized women as concubines (348-49). Matthew's act of making sure Kwabena does not see Afua so that Matthew may have her to himself subtly re-enacts this history. Just as the British imperialists sought to take Africa from the Africans, so Matthew seeks to take the African woman away from a local Ghanaian man.

Matthew mourns for the passing of traditional African culture, implying that he does not believe in the value of British influence on Africa. Interestingly, Matthew also experiences the loss of traditional African culture as a personal loss. This mourning of the loss of African traditions to Western ways is not surprising, for Matthew is both inside and outside of the culture and traditions for which he grieves. Matthew speaks Twi, by the age of six, better than he does English (2). He knows where all the fetish huts in the village are and listens to the spider stories that Kwabena tells him (5, 8). He learns African legends from Kwabena's mother, Yaa, and knows them as well as Biblical ones. "Listen, little one," Yaa says to Matthew when he is a child, "shall I tell you what the thunder is? In the beginning, when Odamankoma created all things---" (3). He is so immersed in Ghanaian culture, in fact, that he "calls God by the name of Nyame in [his] silent prayers" (10). What Matthew ultimately comes to realize, however, is that he also occupies a position that is outside of Ghanaian tradition and culture. By his very circumstance of being there as the son of a missionary from Britain, he is not at one with the place in which he resides. With his difference in race and class, and with, as Gabrielle Collu notes, the privileges that come with his white skin, he is outside of Africa. Because he is exempt from the suffering of Africa and Africans (1, 10), he is not within the culture he laments. Thus, Matthew occupies an uneasy subject-position in Africa. While Ghana is his home and part of his very being, it is, he finally understands, that which is not his by right, that which belongs to another.

It is noteworthy that Matthew enacts what contemporary anthropologist Renato Rosaldo has called "imperialist nostalgia." Rosaldo defines the concept in the following way:

> [Imperialist nostalgia is] a particular kind of nostalgia, often found under imperialism, where people mourn the passing of what they themselves have transformed. Imperialist nostalgia thus revolves around a paradox: a person kills somebody and then mourns his or her victim. In more attenuated form, someone deliberately alters a form of life and then regrets that things have not remained as they were prior to his or her intervention. (108)

What is particularly intriguing about Rosaldo's notion of imperialist nostalgia is that Rosaldo directly connects it to innocent memories, such as those of one's childhood:

> Doesn't everyone feel nostalgic about their childhood memories? Aren't these memories genuinely innocent? Indeed, much of imperialist nostalgia's force resides in its association with (indeed, its disguise as) more genuinely innocent, tender recollections of what is at once an earlier epoch and a previous phase of life. (108)

Speaking of his childhood days with Kwabena, Matthew, in "The Drummer of All the World," laments his loss of the land of Africa itself: "Ours [was] the thin-prowed fishing boats [...]. Ours the groves of slender palms [...]. Ours was the village, too" (9). He follows this lament with a connection of *his* Africa to *his* childhood. "This was my Africa," Matthew asserts, "in the days of my childhood, before I knew how little I knew" (9). Matthew, then, certainly experiences and exemplifies imperialist nostalgia, for his longing for Africa past is simultaneously a mourning for his childhood innocence. Matthew himself does not "deliberately alter [...] form[s] of life" in Africa, but he does, as we have seen, unwittingly occupy the position of an imperialist and exemplify imperialist practices while mourning the loss of his home.

In *Writing Grief: Margaret Laurence and the Work of Mourning* (2003), Christian Riegel argues that the work of Margaret Laurence can be "placed within the larger tradition of writing that explores and figures death and mourning" (4). He maintains that each of the protagonists in the Manawaka series "finds herself in a state of liminality—an in-between state that demarcates a change in human development—and can only move through it by actively mourning" (6). I would argue that Matthew in "The Drummer of All the World" also goes through this "change in human development" through the process of mourning. What makes Matthew's mourning different from that in the Manawaka series is that his mourning is not only for the lost innocence of childhood, but also for the Western construction of the lost innocence of Africa, the old world as he thought he knew it. The "change in human development" comes as Matthew realizes that that his Africa was an illusion: "life had allowed us [Kwabena and himself] this time of *illusion*, and [...] the time was now past" (16 my emphasis).

Matthew describes the Africa he knew in his childhood as both frightening and comforting, qualities that are also often associated with one's childhood: the fright and excitement of new discoveries, the comfort of mother's arms. He describes Africa as frightening when he asserts that every movement of insects in Africa "seemed to me the footsteps of *asamanfo*, the spirits of the dead" (2). He further states that "at night the wooden shutters would slam against the house like untuned drums, and the wind would frighten me with its insane laughter" (2). In both instances, Matthew describes Africa as haunted by those of the past, alive with "the spirits of the dead" and their "insane laughter" (2). Yet, somewhat paradoxically, Matthew also describes Africa as comforting when he suggests that the drums are a living presence whose rhythm is a comfort (7), and when he reminisces about the casuarina tree at which he and Kwabena used to meet. "It was there that the wind spoke to us," he says, "whispering through the feather fans of the branches like the waning voices of the ancestors themselves" (7). Whether describing Africa as frightening or comforting, Matthew invokes the notion of the ancestors' presence, suggesting that what he mourns is a connection with the past. It is the past of Africa and the past of his childhood that are gone. But significantly, it is also his lost innocence that he mourns, for he now knows, as he before did not, that Africa is not his. "I think You [God] might have smiled a little at my seriousness," Matthew states, "smiled as Kwaku did, with mild mockery, at *the boy who thought Africa was his*" (10 my emphasis).

Matthew describes African women in the story as Africa itself. He not only conflates the African mother with Mother Africa, but he also conflates the loss of the old Africa with the loss of his childhood. When Kwabena tells Matthew that his mother, Yaa, has died, Matthew experiences this loss as the loss of his own mother (16). With his statement, "You know as well as I do [...] that she was more mother to me than my own mother" (16), Matthew refers not only to Yaa but to Africa itself. Africa was more mother to him, that is, than the "mother land." In "Mother Africa on a Pedestal," Mineke Schipper states that "In myth, woman has been associated (by man?) with nature [...] as the life-giving mother figure" (37). In "The Drummer of All the World," Laurence, through Matthew, represents the African women Yaa and Afua as "the life-giving mother figure." Yaa is clearly a mother figure to Matthew: she rocks him in her arms, comforts him with African creation stories, nurses him as a baby, and loves him as Matthew loves her (3). Afua, as Matthew describes her, is also a mother figure: she has "maternal strength" (12), and, when Matthew returns to Africa as a man, he sees that "around her the children nuzzled like little goats" (14).

Whereas Yaa seems to represent the old Africa, Afua, late in the story, comes to represent what Africa has become after colonialism. V.Y. Mudimbe and Anthony Kwame Appiah assert that Africa is represented by the West as one vast entity, and Anne McClintock notes that Africa is perceived as ancient and timeless. In the same way, Yaa, as the old Africa, is described as such: "I don't suppose she was really old," Matthew asserts, "But she seemed ancient as stone to me then, with her shrewd seamed face and her enormous body" (2). Like the description of Yaa, the later description of Afua is also one that invokes Africa as timeless, ancient: "Her body is old from work and child-bearing [...] Her breasts are old, ponderous, hanging [...] " (14). Afua, however, now greets Matthew as "master" (14), foregrounding a hierarchical relationship that was not evident between Matthew and Yaa. Just as Afua's breasts are "always full of milk," always giving, so Africa, in the eyes of the imperialist, is "always full" of resources, bequeathing its diamonds and gold to its "master."

Matthew realizes that his love for both Yaa and Africa is also exploitative, and it is this realization that causes him to know that his life in Africa was lived through "illusion" (16). He comes to know that he unwittingly engaged in exploitation of Yaa when he and Kwabena converse about her (16). Just as Matthew loves Africa but is in instances aligned with those who exploit resources from it, so he loves Yaa but exploits her, taking milk from a mother who is not his own. Likewise, Matthew realizes that his love for Afua, like his love for Yaa, is also exploitative. When Matthew makes love to Afua, he says, "possessing her I possessed all earth" (12). He associates her with nature and the land of Africa itself, associations that Schipper suggests are common in African and Western myths alike. But Matthew also construes his relationship to Afua, and thus Africa, as one of possession. Just as he possesses Afua in his lovemaking to her, so he possesses the land of Africa itself. As Matthew himself puts it, "We were conquerors in Africa, we Europeans" (18). Thus, through the character of Matthew, Laurence repeats the trope that construes Africa as woman. In so doing, Laurence demonstrates how imperial and patriarchal forces come together. She shows how the British man's exploitation of the African woman is neither unlike nor unrelated to the British economic exploitation of Africa.

In an interview conducted in the late 1970s, African womanist[21] and writer Mariama Ba critiques male African writers who confuse "the African mother" with "mother Africa":

> Like men, we must use literature as a non-violent but effective weapon. We no longer accept the nostalgic praise to the African Mother who, in his anxiety, man confuses with Mother Africa. Within African literature, room must be made for women [. . .] room we will fight for with all our might." (quoted in Schipper 46)

Along the same lines as Ba, the African womanist Omolara Ogundipe-Leslie suggests that the African woman writer must speak back to the ways in which she has been represented by men but also by Western women. As we have seen, Laurence reveals a feminist viewpoint when she shows how imperialist exploitation and patriarchal exploitation are intimately intertwined. The imperialist impetus, Laurence asserts, is ultimately a masculinist one. Laurence, however, asserts this point by conflating the African mother with mother Africa in her story, a move that would not be endorsed by African womanists Mariama Ba and Omolara Ogundipe-Leslie. As I have noted earlier in this dissertation, the history of British feminism is caught up in imperialist notions. Laurence rightly connects imperialism to patriarchy. To do so by depicting the African mother as Africa itself, however, might be to repeat the very Western notions of Africa and women that Laurence seeks to reject. It might reinforce, that is, the trope that is invoked in Haggard's map, that map that simultaneously depicts the African land and the African woman as that which is to be conquered.

Yet I argue that Laurence plays into the Western idea of Africa as African woman in order to demonstrate how both are exploited. As I note in chapter one, Luce Irigaray, as Judith Butler explains in *Bodies That Matter* (1993), works within and against the idea of woman as material in order to reconceptualize woman (36). Likewise, Laurence presents the African woman as material, as nature, the earth, mother Africa, in order to show how she has been represented as that which is to be exploited. In light of Laurence's strategy, it is particularly noteworthy that she chooses a male character to narrate "The Drummer of All the World." Laurence could not make parallels between Matthew's unwitting exploitations of Yaa and Afua and Britain's imperialist exploitations of Africa if she had chosen a female character. Her choice reflects the complex relationship that European gender roles play in decolonizing Africa. As I explain in my discussion of *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* for instance, Laurence's own position as a woman in Africa was not easily understood by her or by those with whom she associated. Moreover, as is the case in *This Side Jordan,* even though Laurence narrates this story from the perspective of a male protagonist, conceptions of the feminine are still central to her work. In the African novel, the character of Johnnie is "driven away from and out of [his past] by fear of certain faces of the feminine" (Demetrakopoulos 45). In "The Drummer of All the World," the character Matthew must leave Africa not because of a fear, but because of his love for and yet exploitation of that which is construed as feminine: his surrogate mother Yaa, mother Africa, and his lover Afua. Africa is the living mould that covers Matthew's father's books; it is Yaa, "ancient as stone" (3); and it is Afua, who "danc[es] with her shadow" (9). Invoking all these associations of Africa, Matthew leaves Africa and ends the story by addressing his love for Africa itself: "Africa, old withered bones, mouldy splendor under a red umbrella, you will dance again, this time to a new song" (19).

"The Rain Child"

"The Rain Child" is a moving story about being an outsider. The narrator, Violet Nedden, is a British school-teacher who has worked in an African girls' school for twenty-two years and is approaching retirement and return to a "home" that is not truly home, the "mother-land"; Ruth Quansah is an African student of Nedden's who has lived in England and struggles to fit in with the other African girls; and Ruth's father, Dr. Quansah, is a man who is at home neither in England nor in Africa. While critics have focused on Laurence's sympathetic depiction of these characters who are outsiders in their communities, few of them have examined the way the author critiques imperialism and demonstrates how the character of Violet Nedden, much like Matthew in "The Drummer of All the World" or Laurence herself in *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, works within imperialist practices even as, ideologically, she is against them. The author ultimately interrogates Nedden's conflicted subject-position as both imperialist and anti-imperialist, shows how Nedden is aware of her fraught position and mocks her own alignment with imperialism and also explores how Nedden's Western feminist beliefs cannot always be reconciled with those of African women. "The Rain Child" is much more than a study of the outsider in Africa. It is a comment on ongoing imperialist practice and outmoded Western domination in Africa.

In *Subject to Colonialism* (2001), Gaurev Desai discusses the history of Western discourse on the "rationality" of the African: "The colonial question of 'rationality' and the 'mental ability' of Africans," he notes, "was an attempt to put a scientific mask on popular racist (mis)conceptions of Africans in colonial times" (32). In "The Rain Child," Laurence recalls the history of this Western discourse by contrasting Violet Nedden with Hilda Povey, the Eburaso Girls' School's headmistress. While Povey feels "acutely uncomfortable with African parents, all of whom in her eyes [are] equally unenlightened" (106), Nedden does not. Nedden's opposition to the idea that Africans are unenlightened, however, is checked when she distinguishes Africans by class. "The fact that one father might be an illiterate cocoa farmer, while the next would possibly be a barrister from the city," Nedden asserts, "such distinctions made no earthly difference to Hilda Povey" (106). On the one hand, Nedden's conviction here reflects Laurence's own conviction that Africans must be understood as individuals. While in Somaliland, for example, Laurence writes in a letter to Adele Wiseman that "Both the Somalis and the Europeans here seem to be very much a collection of individuals [...] perhaps as one sees more of the world, one tends to think less in terms of generalizations and more in terms of individuals" (*Selected Letters*, 66). On the other hand, however, Nedden's distinction between "an illiterate cocoa farmer" and "a barrister from the city" exposes her alignment with a culture that values the Western traditions of reading, writing and becoming educated over traditional African ways, her alignment with a culture that values the vocation of a "barrister" over that of a "cocoa farmer." Nedden cannot exempt herself from those values and practices that the English brought to Africa and that are part of her life work.

Violet Nedden further distinguishes herself from the headmistress Hilda Povey when she states that she refuses to tend an English garden: "I will have no English flowers [. . .]. My garden burns magnificently with jungle lily and poinsettia" (112). At the same time, however, she still takes part in the English practice of gardening, and her African servant, Yindo, "gently uproots" her garden flowers "from the forest" to place them at her property (112). More interestingly, Violet Nedden takes an explicitly anti-imperialist stance in her perspective on Ruth's friendship with the English boy, David Mackie. Nedden is not concerned for Ruth and David's friendship for the same reason that Povey would be: she is not worried, that is, about the impropriety of an inter-racial friendship. Rather, she takes issue with their friendship because David shows Ruth Africa as if Ruth were a tourist. He shows her Africa, that is, "from the outside" (124). In *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (1997), Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler assert that "private collections of 'primitive' art have long signaled the distinctions of a bourgeois home while museum collections continue to celebrate the preserving and ordering of the Others' cultural artifacts as part of the high culture of a European public sphere" (13). While David Mackie collects African animals, not African art or artifacts, his hobby nevertheless re-enacts the imperial impetus to possess that which is not his own. Violet Nedden's anti-imperialism is explicit in her stance against David teaching Ruth "to celebrate the preserving and ordering of Others"—to celebrate the English possession of Africa. Ruth is "drawn to David because he spoke in ways she knew, and of things which made sense to her" (123). Those ways, as Violet Nedden is acutely aware, are both English and imperial.

What is particularly intriguing about the character of Violet Nedden, and what makes her so like Laurence herself in *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, is that she is aware of the ways in which she is caught up in imperialist values, even as she works against them. In "The Rain Child," Nedden quite explicitly mocks her own imperial position. An authority figure in the classroom, she is still "uncertain" and awkward: "a lady of somewhat uncertain gait, clumping heavily into the classroom with her ebony cane" (106). She also points out the absurdity of her presence and position in rural Ghana and the absurdity of Africans dressing in English school uniforms and learning a language that they may not use: "They [the students] felt free to laugh, my forest children, reticent and stiff in unaccustomed dresses, as we began the alien speech" (106).

The most interesting instance in which Nedden mocks imperial rule, however, occurs when she describes her "rattan garden chair" as a "throne" and depicts her awkward yet comfortable position within it. On the one hand, Nedden illustrates herself in her garden chair as an English queen: "I still sat enthroned in it each afternoon, my ebony sceptre by my side" (112). On the other hand, however, she explicitly mocks her position as such. Her ebony cane, which she describes as a "sceptre," both "reassure[s]" and "mock[s]" (132) her, as if it is a symbol of an imperialism that is no longer powerful, a prize that has outlived its game. Aligning herself with those who have been colonized by the English, rather than with the English colonizers themselves, Nedden buys this "garden chair" from "Jillaram's Silk Palace," a "tatty little Indian shop" (112). She revels in the fact that it is "splendishly garish" and comments that "the red had since been subdued by sun and the gilt was flaking" (112), making fun of the glory and splendour that it unsuccessfully represents, and exemplifying how it has outlived its time. Like the system of colonialism itself, the red imperial throne that represents it is exposed as futile, passé, and obsolete. Even Nedden, as the queen that possesses that "decrepit scarlet throne," is old and decrepit herself, awaiting her retirement and her return "home," to "that island of grey rain where [she] must go as a stranger" (133). The "trivial game" (113) of which Nedden speaks is not only the game of playing queen in her "scarlet throne," but, also, she implies, the entire system of colonialism itself. Through the character of Violet Nedden, Laurence critiques outdated and ongoing English and imperial practices in Africa after colonialism has ended—the continuing presence of schoolteachers like Nedden, the English-style education of African girls in rural communities.

The student Kwaale's meeting with Nedden as Nedden sits in her "scarlet throne" (113) recalls the history of English colonialists meeting with African leaders. In other words, Nedden's ancestors' chronicles of ousting African leaders or "queens" and replacing them with English ones is subtly invoked in this moment between Nedden and Kwaale. In the same vein, the interactions between Kwaale and Ruth repeat the interactions between the colonizers and the African people. Gabrielle Collu, in "Writing About Others: the African Stories" (1997), states that, in "The Drummer of All the World," Kwabena teaches Matthew an African perspective, reversing the white teacher as carrier of civilization trope and therefore "challeng[ing] the exploitative (colonial and postcolonial) tradition of representing the Other" (31). The same might be said of Kwaale, Ruth, and Nedden in "The Rain Child": Kwaale teaches Ruth Twi (126), and she teaches Nedden the absurdity of learning Wordsworth's poem "Daffodils" when she brings her a bouquet of wild orchids (107).

Most intriguing is the cultural misunderstanding that takes place between Kwaale and Ruth at the Odwira festival. At this festival, Nedden hears "a low shout of a young man near [Kwaale]" (127). He shouts to Kwaale, "Fire a gun at me," and following tradition, Kwaale bares herself (127). For Kwaale, as Nedden puts it, it is simply something "permitted at festival time" (128), whereas, for Ruth, who observes the incident, it represents "an extraordinary transgression of English propriety" (New "The Other and I," 113). Paradoxically, the ritual is both severed from history and intimately tied to it. Kwaale and Ruth understand the ritual in the context of the present moment, but Nedden understands it as part of the past, noting that the custom "used to be 'Shoot an arrow,' for Mother Nyame created the sun with fire" (128). The incident is also implicitly historical because it invokes moments of cultural misunderstanding between Europeans and Africans during early colonialism. Furthermore, Ruth's perception of Kwaale's behaviour as improper repeats the European construction of African women as overly sexualized. As Sander Gilman explains in *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness* (1985), "In the nineteenth century, the black female was widely perceived as possessing [...] a 'primitive' sexual appetite" (45). Through Ruth's response to Kwaale's act—"I understand what she is [...] She's nothing but a—" (128)—Laurence demonstrates how such Western and imperial perceptions of African women are maintained and continued, even by African women or girls who have been influenced by English traditions themselves.

Violet Nedden's position in this conflict between Kwaale and Ruth is particularly important. Just as Laurence does not know what to say to the child-prostitute, Asha, in *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* so Nedden in this scene does not know how to remedy this conflict between Kwaale and Ruth. "I should have spoken then," she notes, "tried to explain one to the other" (128). Nedden understands how the past in the "Fire a gun" custom is deeply embedded in the present, but, significantly, she also stands paralyzed between the two cultures. Aware of both Ruth's Western imperialist belief that Africans are improper and Kwaale's ritual that celebrates woman as the "source of life" (128), Nedden still cannot act on her principles to resolve the situation. She is, as Laurence herself is in *The Prophet's Camel Bell*, "bereft of strategies" (Buss 40).

As Wendy Roy suggests in "Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Margaret Laurence's African Writings" (2001), Laurence's interactions with Asha are re-imagined in "The Rain Child" and manifested in Violet Nedden's relationship with Ayesha (45). Unlike Asha, who remains a child-prostitute and serves men who work on Jack's ballehs in *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* Ayesha, in "The Rain Child," is rescued from her fate as a child-prostitute and brought to the village where Violet Nedden, Ruth, and Kwaale reside. Just as Matthew's descriptions of Yaa and Afua in "The Drummer of All the World" are simultaneously descriptions of Africa, so Nedden's description of Ayesha might also be understood as a description of Africa. Men have sought to possess the child-prostitute, Ayesha, and, likewise, European men have sought to possess Africa and exploit that continent's diamonds and gold. Thus, Laurence's "The Rain Child" repeats the Western association of the black woman with Africa itself (as the earth, the bodily, the material), showing how both the black woman and Africa are exploited.

Just as the people of the village do not know where Ayesha's true home or birthplace is, so, too, one might argue, the West does not know—but seeks to understand—Africa's origins. In *Primate Visions* (1989), Donna Haraway argues that embedded within Western imperial discourse is a desire for origins, a desire, that is, to find and know the beginnings of "man" (12). If, as Haraway, asserts, the West locates "man's" origins in Africa as primates, then the West's desire to understand Africa is also a desire to understand the origins of the self. In the same way, Violet Nedden's interactions with Ayesha can be understood as a desire to know the self. As in her other African works, then, Laurence's writing of Africa in "The Rain Child" is a writing of the Western self, an "attempt to understand one's background and one's past, sometimes even a more distant past which one has not personally experienced" (Laurence *Heart*, 13).

After Ruth witnesses Kwaale bare herself at the Odwira festival, she disappears, and Nedden is concerned about her whereabouts. Seeking consolation in Ayesha, Nedden "[does] something then that she had never before permitted [herself] to do"—she holds Ayesha, not to comfort the child, but to comfort herself (130). This moment not only recalls the moment when Nedden admits to Dr. Quansah that she came to Africa for herself, rather than for the Africans (121), but also the moment in "The Drummer of All the World" when Matthew surprises himself by turning Kwabena away from Afua (10). What is significant about all of these instances is that the characters of Violet and Matthew unwittingly engage in possessive, even patriarchal and imperial, acts. Nedden's use of Ayesha "for her own comfort" invokes men's exploitation of her as a child-prostitute in the same way that Matthew's possession of Afua invokes the colonizers' exploitation of Africa itself. If Ayesha represents the continent and idea of Africa, then Nedden's act of embracing her for her own comfort is also an embracing of Africa. Problematically, however, that embracing for one's own comfort is also a kind of exploitation. Similar to the imperialists that have gone before her, Nedden loves and unwittingly exploits Africa in an attempt to know herself. Hence, "The Rain Child" demonstrates how, in Edward Said's words, "European culture gained strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self" (3).

As mentioned, Gaurev Desai asserts that the question of African 'rationality' during colonialism "was an attempt to put a scientific mask on popular racist (mis)conceptions of Africans in colonial times" (32). Violet Nedden differs from Hilda Povey in that she does not see all Africans as "equally unenlightened" (106) and recognizes the problem with giving the African girls an English education. However, Nedden not only relays the notion that both Kwaale and Ayesha are somewhat unintelligent, but also that it is acceptable for them to remain so. Of Kwaale she says that she "would [not] go on and take teacher training," but would marry, and Nedden believes "that would be the right thing to do" (112); of Ayesha she says that she had "begun to learn English," but "found it difficult," and so Nedden "[tries] not to press her beyond her present limits" (114). Thus, Nedden's understanding of these girls as unintelligent might support Western imperial discourse regarding the rationality of the African.

More likely, however, Nedden's depiction of Kwaale and Ayesha reflects the values of Western feminism. Written in 1962, "The Rain Child" exemplifies the Western feminist belief—put forth by such feminist writers as Simone de Beauvoir, Kate Millett, and Germaine Greer—that women must be freed from domestic duties, gain economic independence, and have the choice to work outside the home. Nedden implies that working outside of the home (becoming a teacher, for example) is more worthy than marrying. Moreover, Nedden pities such African girls on account of the difficult lives she anticipates for them:

> But sometimes it saddened me to think of what life would probably be for [Kwaale], bearing too many children in too short a span of years, mourning the inevitable deaths of some of them, working bent double at the planting and hoeing until her slim straightness was warped. (112-13)

Such a statement demonstrates how Western feminist beliefs can be aligned with imperialist ones. That Western women such as Violet Nedden are more likely to go on to teacher training than are Africans such as Kwaale and Ayesha, and that Nedden, as a Westerner, values working outside the home over "bearing too many children" and "planting and hoeing," suggests that Western women are more progressive and advanced than Africans. The Western woman's movement towards liberation is set against African women's supposed imprisonment. Given Nedden's and, thus, Laurence's depiction of the African girls' impending fate, it is not surprising that black African feminists or womanists struggle not only against representations of African women as Africa itself—as the earth, the bodily, the material—but also against Western women's imperial and patriarchal depictions of them. In her depictions of Kwaale and Ayesha, Violet Nedden does not work alongside African womanists who are "victimized on racial, sexual, and class grounds by white men" (Ogunyeme 67), but, rather, against them.

In some instances, "The Rain Child" works in the service of white feminism and against African womanism, while, in others, it works alongside African womanist values. For example, when Ruth and Violet Nedden are at David Mackie's house, Nedden explains that "Mrs. Mackie complained about the inadequacies of local labour, and I sat fanning myself with a palm leaf and feeling grateful that fate had not made me one of Claire Mackie's employees" (122). Mackie's engagement in work outside the home suggests that she is a Western feminist who resists a role as a housewife, while her comment implies that her values are imperial and racist because her complaints about "the inadequacies of local labour" are quite clearly complaints against black workers. Thus, Laurence, through Nedden, points to the hypocrisy of Western women such as Mackie who want liberation from domestic life while maintaining the oppression of Others. Laurence demonstrates the equality of African women in Ghanaian society when Violet Nedden discusses Kwaale's parents and their status in the community. Kwaale's father is a "village elder in Eburaso" who is "highly respected" but makes little money; Kwaale's mother, on the other hand, "with the cassava and peppers and medicinal herbs she [sells] in the market," is the one who supports the family (113). In "Actions Louder than Words: the Historical Task of Defining Feminist Consciousness in Colonial West Africa" (1998), Cheryl Johnson-Odim explains that market women in Nigeria before colonialism held some power in the community and were economically self-sufficient. Speaking of market women in Lagos, Nigeria during colonial intervention, she states that "In the 1930s, the commissioner of the colony [...] suggested that 'the degree of power women exercised within certain markets should be 'nipped in the bud'" (84). Laurence's reference to Kwaale's mother as an economically self-sufficient market women is a subtle reminder that in some ways African women before colonialism had strong positions in society. It is only after colonialism, some African feminists or womanists suggest, that they became victimized "on racial, sexual, and class grounds by white men" (Ogunyeme 67). Laurence's story suggests that some of the market woman's power and economic self-sufficiency remains, even after colonial intervention.

"The Rain Child" exemplifies the author's anti-imperialist and feminist position. The story shows how Violet Nedden. a character who holds many of the same beliefs as Laurence herself, is against the English system of education for African girls, even though she is a part of that very system. Laurence also creates a self-mocking Nedden who resists and yet resides in her imperial "throne." Through Nedden's critique of Ruth and David's friendship, Laurence demonstrates how the West problematically represents Africa "from the outside" (124). As in "The Pure Diamond Man," she critiques the anthropological impetus to collect cultural artifacts, or, in David Mackie's case, animals from Africa, and exemplifies the imperial impetus to study and hence to know the Other. Interestingly, in some instances the story is aligned with Western feminism and imperialism, whereas in others it is aligned with African feminism and womanism and shows the equal economic status that market women such as Kwaale's mother have in Ghanaian society. Most importantly, perhaps, the story shows how Violet Nedden's attempt to understand Africa is an attempt to understand the self, a self who is both alienated from the "mother-land" and at home in an Africa to which she is attached so deeply. Violet Nedden, perhaps like Laurence herself, must ultimately go back home "as a stranger" (133), "[bearing] the mark of Africa upon [herself]" (107), and always remembering how "the rain hovers" (105), and how "the air was like syrup, thick and heavily still, over-sweet with flowering vines" (105).

Margaret Laurence's *The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories* portrays the difficulties in communication between those of European and African cultures and depicts various European and African characters in Africa as "strangers in a strange land." The stories interrogate how those who have been influenced by European cultures and traditions are embedded within, even as they might work against, Western representations of Africa. In "The Pure Diamond Man," Laurence not only challenges Western ideas of Africa and strives to present readers with alternate perspectives on that continent, but also draws attention to the problem of representation itself. Philip Hardacre searches for an authentic Africa, one that supposedly existed in pristine form before colonial contact; yet Laurence makes the point that there is no authentic Africa that can be known or understood outside of Western constructions of it. Tetteh succeeds in the new Ghana by playing into Western capitalism; but Daniel, "a big newspaper man" (185) and one who is influenced by the West, will be the one who tells his story and thus represents Tetteh to the outside world. Importantly, the story challenges the Western notion that Africans are non-thinking beings, and demonstrates how the African, Tetteh, cleverly resists empire by hoodwinking the English anthropologist, Philip Hardacre, into believing in his own Western and imperial ideals. In this way, Laurence shows how the colonized effectively counter the imperial systems that inscribe them.

In "The Drummer of All the World," Laurence shows how the character of Matthew is sometimes aligned with imperialist values even as he opposes his father's missionary cause outright. Matthew enacts what contemporary anthropologist Renato Rosaldo calls "imperialist nostalgia," a simultaneous mourning for Africa's past and one's own innocent childhood. Matthew ultimately leaves Africa as he comes to realize that his love for Yaa, Afua, and Africa is also a kind of violence, possession, and exploitation. Finally, Laurence's "The Rain Child" is an especially intriguing story that comments on the problem with ongoing imperialist practice and outmoded Western domination in Africa. Violet Nedden is aware of her own fraught position as a Westerner in Africa and mocks imperial rule as she resides in her garden "throne" (113). In some instances, Nedden is aligned with Western feminist values that set the so-called progressive European woman against the African, whereas in others she endorses African womanist notions and portrays African women as powerful. In the two stories that are narrated by Westerners, "The Drummer of All the World" and "The Rain Child," the characters' attempts to understand the Africa in which they reside is also an attempt to know the self. In this way, Laurence ultimately realizes in these stories what she says of her own experience in Africa, that "the last thing in the world that would occur to you is that the strangest glimpses you may have of any creature in distant lands will be those you catch of yourself" (*Prophet's*, 10).

Chapter Four

Narrating the Canadian Nation: Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners*

In this chapter I argue that *The Diviners* is anti-imperialist since it works toward an understanding of Canada as its own nation—one that is separate from Britain and British cultural practices—and since it works against the subordination of indigenous peoples. I also, however, examine how *The Diviners* imagines a unified Canadian nation, one that brings together, in Jack McClelland's words, "the two streams of heritage": that of the founding settlers and the indigenous peoples (185). The novel "enacts the desire for a nation that combines and reconciles white and Native peoples" (Fagan 251). It imagines settlers and their descendants as indigenous to the very land they inhabit. It posits them, finally, as "at home" in Canada, in the land they chose as their own. As in her African work, Laurence, through the semi-autobiographical character of Morag Gunn in *The Diviners*, occupies an ambivalent position as an anti-imperialist who is nevertheless caught up in imperialist values: she is anti-imperialist because she situates Canada apart from Britain and works against the subordination of indigenous peoples; and she is unwittingly imperialist because she posits Canada as a unified nation, as if it is a new centre, held together by the coming together of white settlers and First Nations. As I explain in previous chapters, Laurence's African works explicitly demonstrate an awareness of the author's and characters' alignment with imperialist values. Her Canadian works, and specifically *The Diviners,* implicitly challenge Laurence's own imperialism through self-reflexivity and a continual questioning, re-working, and revising of imperialist moments.

The Diviners is not only an anti-imperialist novel, but also a feminist work. Laurence demonstrates in the novel how imperialist and patriarchal values are intimately intertwined: to challenge imperialism, Laurence shows, is simultaneously to challenge patriarchy. As Roberta Hamilton explains in *Gendering the Vertical Mosaic: Feminist Perspectives on Canadian Society* (1996), from the late nineteen-sixties onward, feminists in Canada critiqued the family as an institution. They argued that marriage was "a property relationship in which women gave men the rights to their bodies, their reproductive capacities, their sexuality, and their labour" (Hamilton 64). Significantly, *The Diviners* was published in Canada in 1974. During that time, such feminist critiques of the family were familiar to the Canadian public and to Laurence: Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson had recently struck *The Royal Commission on the Status of Women* (1970), and women's groups created *The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (*NAC*)* (1972) "to pressure government to bring the laws into conformity with the royal commission's recommendations" (Hamilton 55). Laurence's involvement with such feminist issues of the time is evidenced not only in her Manawaka novels but also in her participation in organizations such as the *Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (*CARAL*)*, women's crisis centres, and other women's groups, such as *The Women's Cultural Centre* in Lakefield, Ontario.

The Diviners is the most lengthy novel in the Manawaka series, it is the final novel of that series, and, arguably, along with *The Stone Angel* (1964), it is the most well acclaimed of them, since Laurence won the Governor General's Award for the novel in 1974. The novel is essentially about the character of Morag Gunn, and it is written from that character's perspective. It begins with Morag, a middle-aged woman, looking at the river "that flowed both ways" (11) outside of her rural home in Ontario, and contemplating her life—her own childhood experiences in a Canadian prairie town and her present relationship with her teenage daughter, Pique. The novel moves back and forth between Morag's past and present and delineates that character's search for identity and her ancestral roots. A large portion of the novel is dedicated to Morag's relationship with and marriage to her English professor, Brooke Skelton, a relationship that she experienced in her twenties. Not seeing a way out of her role as literary wife and housewife, Morag leaves Brooke and has a child, Pique, with her childhood friend, a Métis, Jules Tonnerre. Morag is ashamed of her roots as a girl from the small prairie town of Manawaka, and she is ashamed of her status there as the adopted daughter of the garbage-collector, Christie Logan. Yet, despite her attempted connection with Britain and Scotland through her romantic relationships—first with the British Brooke Skelton, and, later in her life, with the Scottish Dan McRaith—Morag ultimately returns to her Métis lover, Jules Tonnerre, and comes to the conclusion that the "land of her ancestors" is Canada—"Christie's real country. Where [she] was born" (415). Morag ultimately comes home, back to her prairie roots, back to Canada and her Canadian homeland.

When writing *The Diviners,* Laurence was influenced by her previous perceptions of Western imperialism in Africa and by the recent feminist movements in Canada. *The Diviners* clearly draws a parallel between European settlers and their descendants who take land and resources from the indigenous people of Canada and men who appropriate women's "reproductive capacities [...] sexuality, and [...] labour" (Hamilton 64). Paradoxically, Laurence critiques patriarchy through the institution of the family and specifically through the marital relationship between the characters of Morag Gunn and

Brooke Skelton. Yet she constructs the future of the Canadian nation in familial terms through the characters of Morag, her Métis lover, Jules, and their daughter, Pique. Laurence's feminism is evident in that she resists the ownership of women by men. She is somewhat aligned with certain imperialist and patriarchal values because she imagines a nation that brings Scots and indigenous descendants together in the very institution of the family that feminists mark as patriarchal. The Canadian family of Scots-Métis descent that Laurence constructs, however, is not a traditional one in which the man is head of the family and the woman is domestic housewife. Rather, Morag and Jules maintain independence from one another. After Morag leaves Manawaka, she and Jules come together only four times: Morag stays with Jules when she leaves Brooke (284-300); she sees him when he twice visits her and Pique (360-71, 448-58); and she visits him before he dies (468-71). Significantly, Morag has difficulty describing to Pique their relationship with Jules: "I guess you could say love. I find words more difficult to define than I used to. I guess I felt—feel—that he was related to me in some way" (254). Through Jules Tonnerre, Morag feels a kind of kinship with the Métis nation. Laurence both employs and challenges the traditional notion of the family in order to critique the patriarchal discourse and practice within which it is embedded.

Laurence expresses her anti-imperialist and feminist beliefs throughout her Canadian work, the Manawaka series. The Métis family, the Tonnerres, come into all of the books in the Manawaka series, and some of the books in that series address cross-cultural communication and mis-communication between different ethnic groups. Such is the case in *A Jest of God* (1966), in which Rachel Cameron has a summer affair with the second-generation Ukrainian immigrant, Nick Kaslik. This chapter of my dissertation, however, examines only *The Diviners.* It does so because that book most explicitly demonstrates Laurence's work against the subordination of indigenous peoples. The novel aptly demonstrates Laurence's anti-imperialist work in Canada and also shows how that work is limited by the imperialist impetus to imagine a nation that is one. Critics such as Gayle Greene, Nora Foster Stovel, Clara Thomas, and Barbara Godard have discussed feminism in *The Diviners* and in Laurence's Manawaka series. However, critics have not engaged in a detailed study of how the critique of imperialism and patriarchy work together in relation to the construction of the Canadian nation in *The Diviners.* My analysis delineates Laurence's anti-imperialism and feminism in Canada during a time when Canada was attempting to define itself as a nation and during a time of prolific women's movements and demands for women's rights.

Canada, First Nations, and Immigration Policy

In order to understand how the ideologies of imperialism and patriarchy circulate in Laurence's work, it is important to look at emerging multiculturalism in Canada and the related construction of Canada's national imaginary in the early 1970s, when Laurence was writing *The Diviners.* This is important to a study of the novel because Laurence foregrounds the Scottish heritage of the main character of the novel, Morag Gunn, just as Laurence insists on her own Scottish heritage in many of her autobiographical essays, as well as in her letters. In *The Diviners*, as I have mentioned, Morag goes to Scotland in search for her personal and genealogical history and ultimately discovers that Canada, not Scotland, is her home: "It's a deep land here [in Scotland], all right," Morag says (415). "But it's not mine, except a long way back. I always thought it was the land of my ancestors, but it is not" (415). Looking at multiculturalism and nationalism in Canada in relation to Laurence's text enables an understanding of how Morag's discovery of her own "Canadianness" reinforces Canada's national imaginary as a country that maintains and preserves British cultural traditions and is tolerant of Others, even as it attempts to sever its ties with Britain.

As Harold Troper explains in the "Multiculturalism" entry of *The Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples* (1999), after World War Two, English Canada's image of itself as exemplifying British values begins to change, and English Canada begins to search for and define its national identity. One can find evidence of this search, Troper notes, throughout the postwar decades: "the formal introduction of Canadian citizenship in 1947, the Massey Commission (a federal royal commission into the state of the arts, letters, and science in Canada which gave rise to the Canada Council), the campaign to place Canadian studies in school curricula [...]." (1001). Laurence is clearly caught up in and affected by this turn from a focus on British cultural tradition to a search for Canada's own identity. Indeed, *The Diviners* may be read not only in terms of Morag's search for her own personal identity, but also in terms of a search, allegorically, for Canada's national identity. As I mention in chapter one of this dissertation, Laurence was writing at the same time that Northrop Frye and Margaret Atwood were taking up questions of Canada's national identity in *The Bush Garden* (1971) and *Survival* (1972) respectively. Alongside mainstream English Canada and other writers in the 1970s, Laurence begins to seek an identity for the Canadian nation apart from Britain and British values.[22]

A solid manifestation of Canada's vision of itself as distinct from Britain is evidenced in the establishment of the Canadian constitution by Prime Minister Pierre

Elliot Trudeau in 1978. The constitution replaced the British North America Act (BNA Act), in which constitutional decisions were made through Britain. Interestingly, Laurence was one of a group of writers and academics from English-speaking Canada who formed the "Committee for a New Constitution." Through this committee, Laurence engaged in a critique of Trudeau's constitutional proposals. In a press release dated 23 June 1978, the committee states that it has "serious reservations about the Trudeau proposals" and suggests changes to them. Specifically, the committee is against the federal government's intention "to adopt a new constitution through an ordinary act of parliament and by consultation at federal-provincial conferences." Instead, the committee suggests that the new constitution "be drafted by a popularly elected constituent assembly and ratified by referendum" (*Committee for a New Constitution,* 2).

Most interestingly, the committee makes the following recommendation with regard to the constituents of the assembly:

> [The assembly] should be structured so as to recognize explicitly the existence of three charter groups in Canada: the English-speaking majority in the whole country and the English-speaking minority in Quebec (including Canadians of other ethnic origins); the French-speaking majority in Quebec and the French-speaking minority in the other provinces; and the native peoples. While regional balance should be assured as well, it is a serious evasion not to recognize the historic and contemporary reality of these three groups. (*Committee for a New Constitution*, 2)

That the committee insists upon an assembly that is made up of the two founding nations of Canada as well as First Nations reveals the privileged position of those groups—at least in the eyes of the committee—in the determining of Canada's national imaginary. While the committee's statement refers to "Canadians of other ethnic origins" (2), it subordinates those Canadians to a group of English-speaking citizens and mentions them only in parenthesis. Somewhat problematically, then, the three groups of people that the committee desires to determine Canada's new constitution do not include newcomers to Canada, those "Canadians of other ethnic origins"; they essentially become subsumed within another group.

While the "two streams of heritage," or "two solitudes," are typically thought of in Canada as the English and the French, in *The Diviners*, those two streams are reconfigured as the English and the Métis—and the Métis, importantly, are of both Native and French heritage. Thus, the three groups of people that the Committee for a new Constitution desires to compose the Canadian constitution are those same three groups of people that lie within the "two streams of heritage" of which Jack McClelland speaks in regard to Laurence's novel. Laurence's vision, in *The Diviners*, of Canada as a country that brings together English, French, and indigenous peoples is manifest in a collective statement that seeks to change government policy. Laurence's vision of Canada as set forth in *The Diviners* is therefore aligned with a collective vision of Canada as set forth by the "Committee for a New Constitution."

By determining the "two streams of heritage" as English and Métis, rather than English and French in *The Diviners*, Laurence takes an anti-imperialist position, a position that resists the hegemony of central Canada's "two solitudes" and replaces those "two solitudes" with Western Canada's "two streams." Laurence takes an increasingly anti-imperialist position by foregrounding the Métis in her work and situating them as equally important as the two founding nations. While Laurence foregrounds the Métis in *The Diviners*, however, Canadian policy does not. In *Scandalous Bodies: Diasporic Literature in English Canada* (2000), Smaro Kamboureli asserts that the Canadian Multiculturalism Act is paradoxically constituted through both the presence of indigenous peoples and a denial of that presence. The Canadian Multiculturalism Act in its very form exposes the fact that there are two hegemonic cultures in Canada: the two side-by-side French and English columns, each translations of the other, exclude not only immigrant languages, but also the languages of First Nations. Moreover, the Act explicitly excludes First Nations: in its "Interpretation" section, where it lists institutions that are in charge of implementing the multiculturalism policy, it states that it does not include First Nations institutions. As Kamboureli points out, it is unclear whether these institutions are excluded because First Nations do not fall under the mandate of the Act or whether they are excluded because they deserve separate and distinct treatment. In either case, the presence of First Nations is invoked in the Act at the same time that that presence is denied (95-100). Ahead of her time, Laurence, both as part of the Committee for a New Constitution and as author of *The Diviners*, foregrounds rather than denies First Nations in Canada and re-situates the "two solitudes" of central Canada—the English and French—as the "two streams" of Western Canada—the English and the Métis.

According to both Eva Mackey in *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* (2002) and Richard Day in *Multiculturalism and the History of Canadian Diversity* (2000), Canadian expansionism in the 1800s was seen as fairer than American expansionism. The Canadian way, embodied in the Royal Canadian

Mounted Police (RCMP), was seen as peaceful and non-violent (35, 118). This so-called non-violent method of assimilating Natives in Canada was institutionalized in the Indian act of 1876. In 1968, just a few years before Laurence publishes *The Diviners*, the White Paper discards the Indian Act of 1876, arguing that the Indigene is now assimilated into Anglo and French Canadian culture. *The Diviners* implicitly works against such notions in the Indian Act. With the historical tales told by Jules Tonnerre and his father Lazarus, Laurence resists the idea that the Canadian way of expansionism was more peaceful than the American one. She resists the idea that First Nations must be and are unquestionably assimilated into Anglo and French Canadian culture. And she resists the persistent and ongoing denial of the indigene in Canada.

It is noteworthy that Laurence's *The Diviners* takes up the history, not of Natives in Canada, but, more specifically, of the Métis in the Red River area of Manitoba. Analyzing the history of Western expansionism in the area, Day explains how the Canadian landscape, in the 1800s, comes to be conflated with indigenous peoples. "Driven by visions of the glory of empire," he states, "those who identified with the new Dominion invoked the European dictum of *terra nullius* to construct the space they desired as empty, unstriated, and therefore fair game" (117). Of course, in Canada, the land was not empty but was occupied by First Nations peoples, and so, as Day notes, European colonizers set forth "to remove from the existing bodies their possession of full human subjectivity by setting them up as Others to the colonizer's Self" (118). The Métis, and, specifically, the Red River settlement that they occupied—which was both European and Indian—posed a particular kind of problem, since the Métis there were "too Savage to be tolerated and too European to be destroyed" (Day 118). Colonizers of the time thus constructed the British Half-Breeds and the French Métis as separate races, races which were made to be inferior to British and Scottish immigrants. Laurence, especially through the character of Pique in *The Diviners*, is affected by this history of colonialism and the rhetoric that conflates the Métis with the Canadian landscape they inhabit. Even as she overtly refuses to accept the idea that the Métis is Other to the European Self, she implicitly posits the Métis as precisely that—as Morag's counterpart and the one who makes Morag, as white settler-descendant, wholly Canadian.

Well before World War Two, Canada was a nation of immigrants. However, not all immigrants were equally welcome in the country. As Troper explains, "Until recently, Canadian immigration policy was as racially selective as it was economically self-serving. Shaped during the 1920s, it reflected the widely held belief that the world's peoples were arranged in a racially drawn hierarchy" (1000). Regulations that barred immigrants from coming to Canada because of race began to loosen in 1948, and, in 1967, all barriers to immigrating due to race in Canadian policy were finally lifted (Troper 1001). The new open-door policy of the late 1960s generated fears of the infiltration of non-whites in Canada on the part of Anglo and French Canadians alike. Thus, it is no accident, I would argue, that shortly after immigration law was loosened, official multiculturalism was introduced, a policy that seeks to manage, control, and contain Canada's "diverse" peoples.

When multiculturalism was first introduced by Trudeau in his address to the House of Commons in 1971, it had a direct relationship to the hegemony of the English and French in Canada. The White Paper, as it was then called, was meant to appease the white, ethnic vote, responding to immigrants such as Germans and Ukrainians, who were worried that their cultures would be subsumed into English or French cultures. In 1982, when multiculturalism was first written into the Canadian Charter of Rights, and in 1988, when the official Multiculturalism Act was established, multiculturalism further responded to the nation's fears of new immigrants coming from the so-called Third World through Canada's open-door policy, fears that were driven by anger and racism. Multiculturalism Canada neutralized and depoliticized racial conflicts and power relations by converting "difference" to "diversity" and by promising to "preserve" and "enhance" the cultures of ethnic groups.

Multiculturalism, as it is now set forth in the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, seeks to value each and every "culture." While its impetus is one of "equality," that equality is ultimately reduced to homogeneity. Moreover, as critics such as Himani Bannerji and Smaro Kamboureli point out in *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender* (2000) and *Scandalous Bodies: Diasporic Literature in English Canada* (2000) respectively, Multiculturalism Canada posits ethnic groups as traditional and unchanging. It suggests that immigrants are always already in a past that is static, ahistorical, essential. Multiculturalism, one might argue, is not a politics of resistance, but rather a state policy that seeks to control, manage, and contain.

Laurence's *The Diviners,* then, comes at a particularly interesting period in Canadian history. This period was concerned, on the one hand, with separating from British cultural tradition and defining Canada as a nation, and, on the other hand, problematically, with managing peoples that were beginning to immigrate from lands other than Europe. Laurence's novel, ultimately, takes up those two prominent concerns of her own contemporary Canadian culture. Through Morag's relationship with Brooke in

The Diviners, which can be read as an allegory for Canada's relationship with Britain, as I have mentioned earlier, Laurence comments on Canada's need to break away from that imperial power. At the same time, however, Laurence foregrounds Morag's Scottish roots, and thus secures for settler-descendants of the British Isles a particularly Canadian identity. This gesture is important in light of the coming of non-white immigrants to Canada due to the loosening of immigration regulations during the late 1960s and early 1970s, when Laurence was writing *The Diviners.* Laurence's novel—since it firmly establishes the Scots-descendant, Morag, as Canadian—one might argue, responds to and is indeed aligned with English-Canada's fears of non-white immigrants. In this way, the determining of Canada as a nation apart from Britain is intimately intertwined with Canada's desire to manage its peoples and establish itself as a multicultural nation. On the one hand, Laurence is caught up in an imperialist framework that unwittingly situates the descendants of the British Isles as Canadian and the Native as the one who makes that Canadian whole. On the other hand, Laurence simultaneously exemplifies a genuine humanitarian concern for the peoples of Canada, and, specifically, for First Nations peoples. She ultimately attempts to reach cross-cultural understanding in the coming together of the peoples of Canada and in the making of a multicultural Canadian nation.

Morag Gunn and Brooke Skelton: An Allegory for the Canadian Nation

Laurence critiques both imperialism and patriarchy through the relationship between the characters of Morag Gunn and Brooke Skelton in *The Diviners.* Brooke, who is Morag's English professor at the University of Manitoba and eventually becomes her lover and husband, is of English descent, but grew up in India, where his father was Headmaster of a boy's school (210). That he grew up in a colonial family, where his father taught English values to Indian boys, suggests that he is aligned with English imperialism. That he is named after two English poets, Rupert Brooke and John Skelton,[23] suggests not only his English background, but also that he is aligned with, and even represents, the English literary canon. Morag represents a contestation of Brooke's alignment with English imperialism and the English literary canon for which he stands. When Brooke states that the passing of the British Raj in India "wasn't the answer" (235), for instance, Morag challenges his view: "But Brooke—surely you can't believe it was right for them, the British, even for you, to have lived there like that, in that way, house and servants, while—" (235). Likewise, Morag challenges the authority of the English canon by writing her own literature. Through her friend Ella's mother, Mrs. Gerson, who introduces her to Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and others, Morag also comes to realize "that English is not the only literature" (203).

Just as Morag challenges the English literary canon, so too does Laurence in the writing of *The Diviners*. As Barbara Godard points out in "The Diviners as Supplement: (M)Othering the Text" (1990), *The Diviners* invokes and revises William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, positing Miranda as the lover of Caliban (55-62). In so doing, Laurence challenges the values implicit within an English canonical text. Laurence fought for the promotion of Canadian literature and the study of Canadian rather than solely English literature at the secondary and post-secondary level. In a CBC television interview in 1985 about the movement to ban her books from schools, she argues for the inclusion of Canadian literature in the school curricula: "If our children are to have access to Canadian literature in high schools as well as at the university level, serious novels and poems and so on, then we must speak out [against the banning of such books]." Morag's challenge to both the British Raj and the dominance of the English literary canon in Canada mirrors Laurence's challenge to British cultural imperialism and her demand to recognize Canadian literature in Canada. To contest the English literary canon in Canada is, during Laurence's time, to contest British cultural imperialism in Canada. As Troper has noted, after World War Two, Canada began to search for a national identity and distinguish itself culturally from Britain. Creating and defining a *Canadian* literary canon, rather than a British one, was indeed a part of that search.

If, as Anne McClintock asserts in *Imperial Leather* (1995), Western patriarchal narratives depict colonized countries as empty, "passively awaiting the thrusting, male insemination of history, language and reason" (McClintock 30), and if, as McClintock also asserts, "the myth of the virgin land is also the myth of the empty land" (McClintock 30), then the relationship between Morag and Brooke is an allegorical one: it represents the relationship between a colonized and colonizing country. In *This Side Jordan*, as we have seen, the English character, Johnnie, views the African prostitute, Emerald, as a "virgin," passively awaiting insemination by the colonizer, "expressionless" and "blank" (*This Side Jordan,* 231). Similarly, in "The Rain Child," the African child Ayesha has a mysterious or "empty" past, with no known language or home (*The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories,* 114). Not surprisingly, then, in *The Diviners*, Brooke, following the discourse of such Western patriarchal narratives, construes Morag as a virgin (216) and determines that she has no history: when Morag asks, "What do you *like* about me?," Brooke replies, "Perhaps it's your mysterious nonexistent past" (212). In McClintock's discussion of Henry Rider Haggard's map in *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), the "empty" land of the treasure map that is to be penetrated is also the body of a woman; in Brooke's assessment of Morag, likewise, Morag's "mysterious, nonexistent past" to be discovered might be likened to the "empty" land of the colonized. Moreover, Brooke's paternalistic attitude toward Morag ["My dearest love, you're very young" (215)], and his unwillingness to have a child with her, perhaps because he has a child in her, is also the colonizer's attitude toward the colonized. As in "The Drummer of All the World," where Matthew's missionary father treats Africans as children, here, Brooke treats his wife as a child. Brooke's attitude toward Morag is at once the attitude of the patriarch towards his woman and the imperialist towards his subject.

To conflate the "empty land" with the "virgin" body, and to suggest that foreign lands and women's bodies await discovery and penetration, is to define women and the colonized as material, the colonizer and man as spiritual. The colonizer and man, that is, bring "spirit" to that which passively awaits them. As mentioned in the first chapter of this dissertation, the word "matter" can be traced to a "set of etymologies which link matter with *mater* and *matrix* (or the womb)" (Butler 31). Brooke defines Morag as a kind of empty but material land—passive, blank, without history. Ashamed of her past, Morag concedes to such a representation of herself. She wants to tell Brooke that "the state of original grace ended a long time ago" (213), but she does not. That "state of original grace" implicitly refers both to Morag's virginity and to the Western construction of colonized countries as the garden of Eden. Brooke assumes that Morag is a virgin, but because she is ashamed, Morag does not correct him (216). When Brooke first asks Morag where she comes from, she says, "'Oh—nowhere, really. A small town [...]. I don't have any family, actually. I was brought up by—" (209), and then she thinks to herself, "By no one" (210). In *Decolonizing Fictions* (1993), Diana Brydon and Helen

Tiffin state that "Both patriarchy and imperialism mask their aggression through language that [...] infantilizes [...] and that succeeds in making the colonized feel guilty for wishing to reject such 'love'" (102). In *The Diviners,* Morag plays into Brooke's infantilizing language as Brooke constructs her as an innocent child and as a material, virginal body that is nevertheless void of history.

However, while *Morag* adheres to Brooke's imperial and patriarchal construction of her, *Laurence* implicitly contests that construction. Laurence works within Western and patriarchal constructions of the colonized and women in order to contest those very configurations. When Morag tells Brooke that she knows that child abuse happens, Brooke responds in a condescending and infantilizing way: "You know in theory [...] but you don't really know, my dearest love [...] you're very young" (215). Morag does not challenge Brooke, but Laurence reveals Morag's inward thoughts to the contrary: "She knows more than theory, about some things. Vernon Winkler, as a small boy, being beaten by Gus. Eva crying in the dancehall [...]" (215). Likewise, as we have seen, Morag does not correct Brooke's conception of her as a virgin; but Laurence challenges that imperial and patriarchal view by revealing that "the state of original grace ended a long time ago" (213). Most interestingly, Morag states of her husband, "*I will never let him see the Black Celt in me*" (246). The phrase that Morag uses to describe herself here—"*the Black Celt*"—not only refers to her temperament, but also subtly suggests an alignment with "Blacks" who have been colonized. Implicitly referring to the notion of the "Celtic savage," Morag posits herself as subordinate in both race and gender to the English colonizer and patriarch.

In *Imperial Leather* (1995), Anne McClintock explains that the English stereotyped the Celt as "a simianized and degenerate race" (52). She also notes that "English racism [...] drew deeply on the notion of the *domestic* barbarism of the Irish as a marker of racial difference" (53). In *How the Irish Became White* (1995), Noel Ignatiev explains that, in nineteenth-century America, during Irish immigration there, the Irish were known as "white Negroes," and blacks were referred to as "smoked Irish" (101). Such references reinforce the idea that Britain and America construct the Celt, historically, in racial terms. Although Morag and Laurence have Scottish rather than Irish ancestry, notions of the "Celtic savage" and the "Black Irish," especially in relation to Morag's identity as "Morag Dhu," are certainly implicit in *The Diviners*. In *The Diviners,* Morag's Scottish lover, Dan McRaith, repeatedly refers to her as "Morag Dhu," black Morag (407, 412, 415). After Morag's adopted father, Christie Logan, dies, Morag finds amongst his belongings a book entitled *The Clans and Tartans of Scotland.* She looks in the glossary for the Gaelic word for black, and notes that "It says *dubh, dhubh, dhuibh, duibhe, dubha,* but omits to say under what circumstances each of these should be used" (427). "Morag Dhu," Morag muses; "Ambiguity is everywhere" (427). The "ambiguity" to which Morag refers is that which aligns her, at once, with Blacks in Africa, the Black Celt, and the Métis. Both Morag and Laurence are at one with Blacks and Métis who were dispossessed and those immigrants of the British Isles who did that dispossessing.

When Morag is with the English Brooke Skelton, she refuses to let him *"see the Black Celt in [her]"* (246), denying her Scottish heritage and also her past—of which she is ashamed—as the adopted daughter of Christie Logan. When Morag is with the Scottish Dan McRaith, by contrast, she embraces her identity as "Morag Dhu." An embracing of such an identity allows her to acknowledge rather than deny her Scottish heritage as well as her childhood past in Manawaka. But the term "Black Irish," as Ignatiev explains, is not only a phrase that is used to racialize the Irish. It is also a term used by the Catholic Irish to describe Protestants of Ireland who have historically supported the British rule of Ulster (102). The term is a particularly "ambiguous" one, then, since it quite explicitly aligns Morag with Blacks and also with those Celtic Protestants who were with the British imperialists. Morag's and Laurence's ancestry as Scots-Presbyterian suggests that the histories of the character and the author alike are caught up in support for the British. Again, Morag is aligned with the very imperialists whom she seeks to challenge.

Various theorists have discussed how the colonizer feels desire, even love, toward the colonized. Brydon and Tiffin, for example, suggest that both imperialism and patriarchy express a kind of "love" toward the colonized and women. On the one hand, to posit the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized as "love" is problematic, since it repeats an injustice toward the colonized. On the other hand, one can see, in light of postcolonial and psychoanalytic theories, how this "love" is ultimately a narcissistic one. In *The Location of Culture* (1994), Homi Bhabha revises Freud's notion of the fetish and argues that the colonizer desires the colonized as his fetish object (74). Bhabha takes Freud's notion of the fetish from psychoanalysis back into the realm of colonial history. Freud disavows woman's sexual difference by positing her as one who is the same as man, and yet not quite complete. In the same way, Bhabha suggests, imperial discourse disavows racial difference by positing colonized men as those who are the same as the colonizers, and yet not quite complete because they are not European men (74-75). Both men and colonizers "love" that which is like them. Through women and the colonized, colonizers can see and "love" themselves. Men and colonizers alike posit women and the colonized as Others who make them whole.

In *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said explains that the West feels desire for the Orient, perceiving it with "shivers of delight in—or fear of—novelty" (59). In both Bhabha's and Said's theories, the colonizer constructs the colonized as that which is familiar—woman and colonized as the same as man and colonizer but not quite complete—in order to manage desire for the colonized. It is not surprising, then, that Laurence's allegory of the relationship between a colonizing and colonized country is configured in the romantic relationship between a man and a woman. Just as the colonizer constructs the colonized, his object of desire, as familiar, so Brooke also constructs Morag, his object of desire, as that which is familiar, through tropes that depict both the colonized and women as passive, empty of history, and innocent. In turn, just as Brooke views Morag as the one who makes him complete, so Morag views Jules Tonnerre, a Métis, as that which makes the white Canadian settler whole. Through Morag's feeling of kinship with Jules Tonnerre ["I guess I felt—feel—that he was related to me in some way" (254)], Morag posits Canada, rather than Britain, as the new centre. She foregrounds, re-situates, and re-figures woman and the white settler-descendant, that is, as quintessentially Canadian.

Morag's departure from Brooke signifies a departure of Canada and Canadian literature from England and the English literary canon. As Gunilla Florby puts it in *The Margin Speaks: A Study of Margaret Laurence and Robert Kroetsch from a Post-Colonial Point of View* (1997), "Morag—the Canadian artist—must break loose from the shifting domination of English letters and write out of her own culture" (206). That the publication of Morag's first book instigates her departure from Brooke suggests that the book's conception is at once the conception of Morag as her own woman and the conception of Canadian literature apart from British cultural traditions. When the process of revising the novel is complete, Morag is "filled with the knowledge that this part of herself is really there" (280). Morag's publication of the book in her own name and her final act in the novel, which is "to set down the title" (477) of her latest book, symbolically suggest that woman and Canada have come into their own and can produce valuable literature. In "Where the World Began," an essay in *Heart of a Stranger* (1976), Laurence states: "We [Canadians] have only just begun to value ourselves, our land, our abilities. We have only just begun to recognize our legends and to give shape to our myths" (172). In *The Diviners,* Morag's departure from Brooke is the moment when she begins to value herself, her abilities, and her myths.

In *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism, and Gender* (2000), Himani Bannerji argues that Canada's national imaginary is constituted, in part, in response to a threat from outside itself. Always in danger of being subsumed and incorporated into an imperial power, such as the United States or Britain, the argument goes, Canadians must identify and distinguish themselves apart from those imperial powers (80). Similarly, in *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* (2002), Eva Mackey states that "A constant theme in debates about Canadian identity [...] is the notion that Canada is marginal to and victimized by various forms of colonialism, most recently American cultural imperialism" (9). In

"Where the World Began," Laurence herself says that Canadians have lived "under the huge shadows of [. . .] two dominating figures, Uncle Sam and Britannia" (172).

Morag's departure from Brooke signifies both woman's departure from a dominating and patriarchal man and Canada's departure from that dominating, imperial figure of "Britannia." Morag's inner response to Brooke's accusation that Morag is hysterical—"*I do not know the sound of my own voice. Not yet, anyhow*" (277)—refers not only to her voice as a woman within the institution of patriarchy, but also to the voice of Canada under the imperial and cultural influence of Britain. Women and Canada, Laurence implies, must come to know "*the sound of [their] own voice.*" Morag's realization that Brooke "has believed he owns her" (299) is the knowledge that, within the context of patriarchy and imperialism, men believe they own women just as imperialists believe they own their subjects.

Such feminist implications in *The Diviners* are underscored by the fact that Laurence wrote the novel during the formation of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) (1972), whose "goal was equality of opportunity for women" outside of the home and outside of traditional marital and familial relations (Hamilton 55). Such anti-imperialist implications in the novel are underscored by the fact that Laurence also wrote the novel during a time of heightened Canadian nationalism. This nationalism is evident in the establishment of the *Bilingualism and Biculturalism (B & B) Commission* (1969) and *The White Paper on Multiculturalism* (1971), both of which began to imagine Canada in terms of "diversity" and "multiculturalism," rather than in terms of its relationship with Britain. Morag's departure from Brooke in *The Diviners*, especially when one notes that she moves directly from a romantic relationship with

Brooke to a romantic relationship with her Métis school-mate, Jules Tonnerre, allegorically signifies Canada's departure from "Britannia" and its turn toward an identification with the indigenous peoples of its own land. Canadian nationalism, for Laurence, is linked to an identification with First Nations peoples. At a time when Canada was distinguishing itself from Britain, and would soon establish its own constitution to replace the BNA Act, Laurence imagines a re-conciliation between white settlers and First Nations that makes settlers indigenous to the land they inhabit. At a time when Canada begins an open-door policy, allowing immigrants from the so-called Third World to come to Canada, Laurence re-establishes Canada as a place that is, paradoxically, apart from Britain and yet *for* descendants of the British Isles.

Laurence's feminist and anti-imperialist beliefs are troubled precisely because, as I mention in chapter one of this dissertation, Canadian nationalism is embedded within imperialist ideology, even as it purports to be tolerant of Others and multicultural. As Neil ten Kortenaar argues in "The Trick of Divining a Postcolonial Canadian Identity: Margaret Laurence Between Race and Nation" (1986), nation is often established on the same foundations as empire: "anti-imperialism creates new centres where once there had been only margins" (11). In *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983), Benedict Anderson argues that the idea of the nation is based on bringing together a large, anonymous group and positing them as a community. According to Pierre Trudeau's multiculturalism as set forth in the White Paper in 1971, "acceptable cultural diversity must buttress the project of nation-building and national unity in Canada" (Mackey 66). *The Diviners* creates Canadian unity on the basis of "diversity," thus establishing a new imperialist centre in the bringing together of all Canadians in the nation of Canada.

Catherine Parr Traill: British Settler-Subject, Canadian Woman, and Feminist

One of the ways in which Laurence posits a Canadian nationalism that might also be imperialist is through Morag's imagined relationship with the historical pioneer-settler, Catherine Parr Traill. Sister to fellow pioneer and writer Susanna Moodie, Traill emigrated from England to Canada in 1834, "faced disasters and family trials" in Canada, and wrote, among others, a book for Canadian settlers entitled *The Backwoods of Canada* (1884) (Gray x-2). In *The Diviners*, Morag invokes Parr Traill as a spiritual ancestor and muse figure. In so doing, she aligns herself with one of the earliest Canadian feminists and pioneers, who nevertheless emigrated from an imperial country and exemplifies traditional and imperial English values.

Morag's invocation of Catherine Parr Traill as her muse figure enacts Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson's theory, in "Settler Colonies" (2000), that Canadian settlers and their descendants desire to be indigenous to the Canadian land they inhabit. Johnston and Lawson explain that settlers mimic the country from which they are displaced, and, yet, they can never quite mimic that culture exactly. Thus, they desire to be indigenous to the country they have settled: they create for themselves an indigenous identity. We can see such constructed indigenous Canadian identities, the authors assert, in idealized figures such as the Mountie, the pioneer, and the woodsman. If, as Johnston and Lawson explain, this "indigenization" of the settler effaces the presence of First Nations and the violent history by which settlers invaded the country of Canada, then Morag's act of aligning herself with the pioneer Catherine Parr Traill in *The Diviners* is an imperialist one: it establishes Morag's Canadian indigenous identity and, in so doing, displaces and disavows First Nations. Paradoxically, Laurence aligns Morag with a pioneer figure who usurps an indigenous identity, even as she foregrounds the presence of First Nations and addresses the problem of racism in Canada.

In "Dividing the Diviners," Ken McLean points out that Catherine Parr Traill "embodies the tradition of the successful upper-middle-class British settlers" (101). Traill, as an early Canadian settler of the 1800s, would have been influenced by the *Canada First Movement*, a movement that was both imperialist and nationalist. As Eva Mackey explains, the search for and construction of Canadian national identity began soon after confederation in 1861, which "had been shaken by the Riel Rebellion, a great deal of French resistance to confederation and a depression" (29). Subsequently, the *Canada First Movement* was formed:

> The early nationalism of the *Canada First Movement* was grounded in the belief that Canada was a "Britain of the North," a "northern kingdom" whose unique and distinctive character derived from its northern location, its ferociously cold winters, and its heritage of "northern races." This racialized "Canadianness" was mobilized to create links between Canada and Britain and other northern and "civilized" nations, to differentiate Northern and Southern peoples (races), and to distinguish Canada from the USA. (Mackey 31-31)

That Morag invokes Parr Traill as a spiritual ancestor and pioneer who would have been influenced by the *Canada First Movement* suggests that, to some extent, Morag is historically aligned with such imperialist and nationalist notions. Morag's act of situating herself as a spiritual descendant of Parr Traill also problematically re-enacts the creation of "links between Canada and Britain" that was part of the *Canada First Movement's* agenda: while Morag is Canadian, her imagined ancestor is essentially a British woman. Morag's alignment with Parr Traill, moreover, re-enacts the idea—embraced by the *Canada First Movement*—that Canada's identity is intimately connected to its northern climate, "its ferociously cold winters." Imagining Parr Traill's plight, and addressing her directly, Morag states, "at least you wouldn't starve during the winter. You'd pick blueberries or something. Start a jam factory. Make pemmican out of the swayback which dropped dead of exhaustion on the Back Forty" (110). Parr Traill's "Canadianness," it would seem, is grounded in her survival in the backwoods of Canada. Continuing the imperialist agenda of the *Canada First Movement*, Laurence creates for Morag—through Morag's association with Parr Traill—an indigenous, "pioneer" identity. That identity invokes both the idea that British settlers and their descendants are at one with the land they have settled and the idea that it is this very "oneness" with the harsh Canadian landscape that makes them distinct from "Uncle Sam," a presence, as Laurence asserts, "under the shadow" of which Canadians have lived for so long (*Heart* 172).

The positioning of Morag as a descendant of a pioneer, a kind of Canadian indigene, allows Laurence to accommodate what Himani Bannerji argues are the two threats upon which Canada's national imaginary is based. On the one hand, Bannerji argues, Canada's national imaginary is constituted upon the idea of survival. Threatened from within its own borders, the argument goes, early Canadians must endure the vast wilderness of Canada, perceived and interpreted as dangerous and empty. On the other hand, Canada's national imaginary is also constituted in response to a threat from outside itself, a threat of being subsumed and incorporated into America. While the early settler's notion of being threatened from within Canada itself denies and ignores the presence of indigenous peoples, conflating them with the dangerous and threatening land they inhabit, the notion of being threatened from without, by American powers, denies Canada's own imperial history and impetus. Canada's national imaginary emerges as it denies the presence of aboriginals and forgets its history as an invader-settler colony. Laurence inadvertently repeats this scenario as she creates a pioneer-ancestor who endures and manages the difficult climate of the north, and, in so doing, sets herself a distinct Canadian identity apart from "Uncle Sam."

It is significant that Morag aligns herself with a historical figure who is not only a Canadian pioneer, but also a woman. Interestingly, Morag calls on Parr Traill as her muse at moments when she worries about her daughter Pique, invoking her spiritual ancestor as a fellow Canadian and as a mother (109-10, 185-86, 309-10). In the context of Morag's invocation of Parr Traill, then, that spiritual ancestor might be thought of as a kind of imperial mother, a mother of the Canadian nation. As I explain in chapter one of this dissertation, first-wave British feminists, according to Antoinette Burton in *Burdens of History* (1994), constructed the notion of British motherhood as an imperial duty to aid Indian and African women. Such feminists spoke to the fear of degeneration by promising to maintain, preserve, and mother the white race. In the same way, as I also explain in chapter one of this dissertation, white Canadian feminists perceived themselves as superior to immigrants and attained the vote at the expense of First Nations. Not only did Canadian suffragists pit themselves against non-English speaking immigrants, securing "safe votes" for their male counterparts, but they also attained the vote between 1916 and 1922, well before indigenous peoples attained it in 1960.

Morag's alignment with Parr Traill suggests that she is part of a feminist history that is also imperial. Importantly, however, Laurence revises and critiques the notion that to mother the nation is to reproduce whiteness. Through the figure of Morag's Scots-Métis daughter, Pique, Laurence critiques patriarchy, suggesting that a child can legitimately be born outside of marriage and be raised without a father. Implicitly, she also critiques imperialism, suggesting that a nation can be born without an imperial father—without the patriarchal and imperial figure of Brooke Skelton, without imperial England. Paradoxically, Laurence's novel situates Canada as apart from imperial Britain, even as it situates England's influence as integral to the forming of the nation. This positioning of Canada in relation to England is particularly relevant during a time when Canada was determining its own national imaginary apart from Britain and simultaneously "managing" its new "diversity" in response to the coming of non-European immigrants. Morag, as the mother of a mixed-race child, symbolically gives birth to a new kind of nation, one that problematically situates the future of Canada in the coming together of white settler-descendants and First Nations peoples.

Although Morag invokes Parr Traill as a muse figure, she ultimately abandons her: "So farewell, sweet saint—henceforth, I summon you not" (431). As Christian Bok puts it in "Sibyls: Echoes of French Feminism in 'The Diviners' and 'Lady Oracle'" (1992), *The Diviners* "argues that women who can be their own muse upset the phallocentric distribution of creative authority" (91). Laurence draws upon the notion of the muse figure, a figure that is traditionally embedded within the English literary canon.

Laurence therefore "upset[s] the phallocentric distribution of creative authority," not only by ultimately being her own muse figure, but also by revising that very notion, by creating a muse figure for a female, rather than a male, writer. That Morag leaves Parr Traill as she leaves Brooke Skelton earlier in the novel suggests that Morag becomes her own independent woman and is no longer defined by the system of patriarchy. Parr Traill, unlike Brooke Skelton, is not a patriarchal figure. As Bok implies, however, Morag's abandonment of her is, nevertheless, an abandonment of patriarchy, since, historically, the invocation of a muse for creative inspiration is a male tradition. By abandoning Parr Traill as her source of inspiration, Morag comes into her own as a woman and as a Canadian writer.

As Karin E. Beeler states in "Ethnic Dominance and Difference: The Post-Colonial Condition in Margaret Laurence's *The Stone Angel, A Jest of God*, and *The Diviners*" (1988), "[Morag's] resistance to [...] Catherine Parr Traill functions as a [...] rejection of the authorities of colonialism" (31). Morag is implicitly aligned with the intertwining discourses of imperialism and first-wave feminism when she associates herself with Parr Traill; and yet, she works against those very discourses when she ultimately outgrows her need for her. Furthermore, most of her inner discussions of and with Parr Traill are preceded by contemplations of the Connor family, a family who lived in the pioneer house that Morag owns on McConnell's landing. Parr Traill represents an ideal to which Morag unsuccessfully aspires: Morag often comments on Parr Traill's domestic faultlessness and compares her own "sloth" to Parr Traill's productivity (108). Conversely, the Connor family, at least in Morag's imagination, is plagued by hardship and strife (106). Laurence's juxtaposition of these two "pioneer" stories challenges romanticized and idealized representations of settlers such as Parr Trail and replaces them with stories, such as Sarah Connor's, that are about death in childbirth, madness, and despair (106-07). Ultimately, Laurence upsets the national ideal of motherhood and domesticity. Laurence maintains that settler women suffered, and she refuses to take the ways in which women are represented in patriarchy as given.

Challenging Official Canadian Narratives: Settlers of the British-Isles and the Métis

In an essay entitled "The Poem and the Spear," in *Heart of a Stranger*, Laurence writes about the similarities between the nationalist Somaliland leader, the Sayyid, and the Métis leader, Louis Riel. She also draws a connection between the plight of the Scots during the Highland Clearances and the plight of the Métis during the Riel Rebellion. In *The Diviners,* Laurence links the histories of the Scots and Métis peoples, but not by reinforcing what Eva Mackey calls the "Benevolent Mountie Myth," the placement of "a representative of the state and a representative of minority culture—colonizer and colonized—in a friendly, peaceful [collaboration]" (1). Rather, she reiterates how, as she states in a CBC interview with Robert Fulford soon after *The Diviners* was published, "the fate of these two peoples was interwoven and bound together." Laurence brings forth this "interwoven" fate in the stories she relays about each group of people throughout the course of the novel. While she presents various histories of the English, Scots, and Métis battles in Canadian history, she does not present any of them as definitive. Instead, she juxtaposes various versions of the stories, giving none of them precedence over the others. When Morag finally goes to Scotland to visit her lover, Dan McRaith, and the land of her ancestors, she comes to the conclusion that "The myths are my reality. Something like that" (415). As Paul Hjartarson puts it in "'Christie's Real Country. Where I Was Born': Story-Telling, Loss and Subjectivity in *The Diviners*" (1988), "Morag Gunn, appears, on the one hand, to shape and give meaning to the life story she tells and, on the other, to be entirely shaped, to be herself composed by the stories told" (43). The same could be said, we might note, of the nation of Canada itself, that Morag gives shape and meaning to histories of the nation as the nation itself comes into being by those very histories. The "myths" are "the reality" that define both Morag and Canada.

Laurence works within and against the Scots and Métis stories in order to demonstrate that they share a history of dispossession by the English and that the Scots are problematically implicated in the dispossession of Métis peoples. When Morag is a child and throughout her life, Christie tells her stories about her Scottish ancestors. Christie's stories give Morag a sense of belonging in Canada as a Scots descendant, since Christie creates for Morag an imaginary ancestor in Piper Gunn, an ancestor, as Morag later explains, who is based on the historical figure of Archie McDonald (443).[24] The stories show how early Scots immigrants were dispossessed of their own land by British colonialists. Referring to the Battle at Culloden of 1746, Christie explains that it marked the end of the Highland clan culture: "the clans stood together for the last time, and the clans were broken by the Sassenach cannons and the damned bloody rifles of the redcoat swine" (57). This dispossession is particularly meaningful to Morag, for, as Neil ten Kortenaar explains, "The ostracism Morag suffers because she is related to Christie the scavenger is related metonymically to the dispossession of the Highland clearances, and so becomes meaningful" (15). Laurence, however, through Morag, challenges Christie's glorification of the Scots fight against the Métis. When Morag asks of the Métis, "Were they bad?," Christie "repeats the word as though he is trying to think what it means. 'No,' he says at last. 'They weren't bad. They were just there'" (97). Christie's story regarding the dispossession of the Scots at the Battle of Culloden demonstrates how the Scots and Métis people share a history of dispossession; his story regarding the Scots-Métis battle at Red River and Morag's intervention in that story, conversely, show how the Scots and the English share an imperial history of dispossessing. Thus, through these stories, Laurence exemplifies Morag's problematic subject position. As a Scots descendant in Canada, she is aligned both with and against imperial histories.

Just as Laurence challenges and revises Christie's stories in order to show that the Scots were not only dispossessed themselves, but also dispossessed others, so she challenges official Canadian histories that construct Louis Riel, the Métis leader at Red River, from an English perspective. Christie tells Morag stories about her Scottish ancestors, and, likewise, Jules Tonnerre's father, Lazarus, tells Jules stories about his Métis ancestors. When Jules tells Morag Lazarus's story about Rider Tonnerre and the Prophet, Morag recognizes the Prophet from history class, and points out that he is Louis Riel. Jules's response indicates that his understanding of Riel opposes that of the history books: "Sure. But the books, they lie about him. I don't say Lazarus told the story the way it happened, but neither did the books and they're one hell of a sight worse because they made out that the guy was nuts" (162). By challenging the way in which Riel is constructed in official narratives, however, Laurence does not imply that Lazarus's and Jules's versions of the story are definitive. Morag says of Riel, for example, "I thought he was supposed to be a very short guy," and Jules responds, "No, very tall" (162).

Laurence here juxtaposes the English and Métis versions of Riel as diminutive or glorified in order to demystify them and foreground the idea that there is no single truth to the stories, only versions and perspectives. As Morag herself puts it when she sees that the newspapers reporting about Dieppe are "full of bravery, courage, camaraderie," "What is a true story? Is there any such thing?" (159).

In *Multiculturalism and the History of Diversity* (2000), Richard Day discusses how particular Canadian texts, especially those created for schools, efface the brutal history of the Canadian imperial state (29). Laurence works against this effacement by setting the tales in *The Diviners* against official histories. By juxtaposing various stories regarding Scots and Métis histories in Canada, Laurence ultimately challenges any one version, thus working against the dominant, imperialist representations of Others.

Referring to the beginning of *The Diviners,* when Morag studies photographs of her childhood, Nora Foster Stovel states, in "(W)rites of Passage: The Typescript of *The Diviners* as Shadow Text" (2001), that "Morag *reads* herself into the *Snapshots* [...], interpreting her unseen presence hidden behind the body of her dead mother, where she is 'buried alive, the first burial' (6)" (106). The impending birth of Morag as a woman and a writer parallels the impending birth of Canada as a nation. The "dead mother" from which Morag is severed, the novel implies, is also Britain, the "mother land" from which Canada must separate in order to be born. If, as Gunilla Florby asserts, Canadians are indeed severed from their collective histories (23), then Morag's position as an orphan parallels Canada's position as disengaged both from Britain and its own history in relation to First Nations peoples. Through the course of the novel, Morag rectifies her own position as an orphan, and, metaphorically, Canada's position as an orphan of

Britain, by learning to divine personal and national meaning. Just as she divines personal meaning from the snapshots she reads, so she divines national meaning from the tales of Christie Logan and Lazarus and Jules Tonnerre. Just as she, through Christie, imagines her father's role in World War One in order to accommodate his seeming absence in the photograph of the Canadian Fields Artillery (100-103), so she imagines the historical figure of Piper Gunn in response to the absence of her family name, Clan Gunn, in Christie's book on the Clans of Scotland (58-61). The stories that fill in the absences of Morag's and Canada's past are neither fact nor fiction, but both intertwined. Christie's story about Morag's father saving him during the war is later revealed by Prin to be a fiction (223-24);[25] and Piper Gunn is actually based on the Canadian historical figure of Archie MacDonald, although he is a fictional ancestor of Morag's (443). For Morag's sake, Christie glorifies Morag's father's role in the war; Laurence, however, works against such glorification by revealing, through Prin, its possible fabrication. Laurence thus challenges histories, official or otherwise, that efface imperial domination as it is manifested in war. Ultimately, in *The Diviners,* Morag and Canada move from being orphaned by their histories to reconnecting with them by picking up the pieces of history—scavenging, divining, inventing, and creating.

Morag, the Tonnerre Family, and the Canadian Landscape

In *The House of Difference* (2002), Eva Mackey makes the following statement regarding Canada's relation to First Nations:

> Historically, in colonial discourse, links have been made between Native peoples and a purer state of nature […]. Aboriginal peoples become equated with land and nature. They represent harmony between humans and nature, and the

> untouched and virgin natural land that comes to represent Canada's beginnings. Their presence constructs a historical connection to the land that helps make Canada a "Native land" to settlers and immigrants. (45, 77)

Laurence engages in this imperial discourse of which Mackey speaks when she associates Pique with nature. In the song that Pique writes, for instance, Pique says that "The mountain and the valley hold my name" (490). Unlike Morag, who, as a descendant of white settlers, is "Native" to Canada "only insofar as she is 'foreign' to Natives" (Kamboureli 91), Pique, as part Native, is, problematically, at one with the landscape in which she resides. Laurence further engages in such imperial discourse when she associates nature with "Canada's beginnings" (Mackey 77). She calls the weeds in the river "prehistoric" (379), for example, and she refers to the Heron she sights as "ancient-seeming" (380). For Laurence, the Canadian landscape, the Native, and Canada's "ancient" past come together as one, and, in various descriptions throughout *The Diviners,* they are intimately intertwined.

Significantly, Laurence forges a connection between Morag and the historic Canadian landscape she inhabits. Morag's "Canadianness," like Catherine Parr Traill's, is grounded in a survival of the elements: "[Morag] might just possibly survive the heat of summer after all. Then [...] the battle to survive the godawful winter would begin. What a country, and how strange she cared about it so much" (378). Morag is Canadian, the novel implies, precisely because "[cares] about" the Canadian landscape and survives its elements.

Laurence forges the connection between Morag and nature and landscape further through her and Roland's sighting of a Great Blue Heron. When Morag sees the Heron, she is in awe, and she notes that it is "Ancient-seeming, Unaware of the planet's rocketing changes" (380). She speculates that it unknowingly moves "not only towards its own individual death but probably towards the death of its own kind" (380). Her experience of sighting the Heron recalls Donna Haraway's assertion that, after World War Two, there was a Western desire to go back to nature in order to connect to an idyllic past. At the historical moment when the West is expanding and developing in science and technology, Haraway maintains, it imagines a recreation of the garden of Eden, a reclosing of the broken globe. At that same historical moment, when Western progress and technology destroy nature and, thus, lead "towards the death of [the Heron's] own kind," Laurence desires a spiritual connection to that which is about to be lost. After contemplating the Heron sighting, Morag experiences a kind of epiphany: "That evening, Morag began to see that here and now was not, after all, an island. Her quest for islands had ended some time ago, and her need to make pilgrimages had led her back here" (380). Morag's epiphany is an awareness that she need not be dependent on those patriarchs of the British Isles, like Brooke, and also an awareness that Canada need not be tied to an imperial Britain. Her epiphany, moreover, suggests that the "here and now" is connected with an "ancient" past. This point is reiterated in the symbol of the river flowing "both ways" (11), past and present, and in the very form of the novel—in the way that Morag's present is narrated in the past tense, while her past is narrated in the present. For Morag, and, essentially, for Laurence, the white Canadian settler must break from the "island" of Britain and—through a connection with nature, the Canadian landscape, and its own past—"make pilgrimages" that ultimately lead "back here," to Canada.

Since, in imperial discourse, nature, the Canadian landscape and the "ancient" past are conflated with First Nations, Morag's desire to connect with nature and the land is also a desire to connect with First Nations. Conversely, her impetus to come together with First Nations, through Jules and Pique, is ultimately a desire to be at one with "natural" Canada. As mentioned, Morag and Jules become romantically involved in the novel when Morag leaves Brooke: Morag, and, implicitly, Canada, leaves the patriarchal and imperial world of Brooke and Britain in order to re-connect with the Indigene. Laurence describes the joining of Morag and Jules not only as a personal joining, but also as a joining of larger significance, a kind of unity of the Canadian nation:

> In her present state of mind, [Morag] doesn't expect to be aroused, and does not even care if she isn't, as though this joining is being done for other reasons, some debt or answer to the past, some severing of inner chains which have kept her bound and separated from part of herself. (292)

That Laurence describes Morag and Jules's lovemaking as a "debt or answer to the past" suggests both Morag's personal past with Jules and Canada's national past with Métis peoples. On a personal level, Morag might feel that she and the people of Manawaka owe Jules and the Tonnerre family a debt for their marginal treatment and especially for Jules's sister Piquette's tragic death by fire in the Tonnerre home. On a national level, Morag and Jules's lovemaking "answers" the question of white settler descendants' relation to Métis and, to some extent, rectifies the separation between the two groups of people in Canada. The "inner chains," which, paradoxically, have kept Morag "both bound and separated from part of herself," are those that have tied her to Brooke and Canada to Britain. The coming together of Morag, a descendant of white settlers, and

Jules, a Métis, is, for Morag and for Canada, a letting go of that "part of herself" that is tied to Britain and a welcoming of that which is just coming into being. Morag and the settler-descendants she represents come into being as they gain independence from the homeland and move toward oneness with the place in which they reside. Just as Laurence creates a connection between Morag and the nature, land, and history that she negotiates, so too does she create a connection between Morag and the Métis people, who are, in imperial discourse, historically associated with that very nature, land, and history. Laurence's acknowledgement of the Métis in *The Diviners,* then, is problematically imperial, since the author posits Jules as Other to Morag. Morag comes together with both the landscape and the Métis figure who makes her whole.

This coming together of settler-descendants and Métis peoples finds its ultimate expression in the character of Pique, the daughter of Morag and Jules. As Nora Foster Stovel explains, at the end of the novel, Morag passes "the torch to the younger generation embodied in Pique, who combines the words and music, Celtic and Métis myths, to celebrate her dual song that concludes *The Diviners* (*"(W)rites of Passage,"* 117). Pique's song that includes both the written tradition of Britain and the oral tradition of Natives, and her blending of Celtic and Métis myths, suggests that "the younger generation embodied in Pique" (Stovel, *(W)rites of Passage,* 117) is no longer tied to patriarchy or Britain. Instead, Pique is at one with the Scottish and Métis ancestors that are both part of Canada. The ongoing sexism and racism that Pique experiences, however, qualify that idea. Pique experiences overt sexism, and perhaps racism, when she is traveling through Manitoba where some men throw beer bottles at her and cut her arm (118-19). That the police give Pique a warning for this incident—when it is clearly the men who are the abusers and Pique who is the victim—shows how such sexism is entrenched in the police system and, thus, the Canadian state. Pique experiences racism when a classmate calls her a "dirty halfbreed" (446). That this classmate's father is on the School Board and that, as Pique says, "It wouldn't do any good to see the principal. He'd be sorry and all that, but he couldn't do anything" (447), show how both sexism and racism are firmly entrenched within the Canadian school system. While Laurence brings together Scots and Métis in Canada with the figure of Pique, positing a hopeful, multicultural future for the next generation, she also quite powerfully exemplifies how that joining is not conclusively attained. Therefore, *The Diviners* posits the desire for a future multicultural nation while simultaneously exemplifying the systematic establishment of sexism and racism that remains.

The bringing together of the Scots settler-descendants and Métis in Canada is, one might argue, *for* those settler-descendants: it posits the Métis as Other to the white settler and establishes the white settler-descendant as truly Canadian. As Eva Mackey puts it, the presence of Natives in Canada "constructs a historical connection to the land that helps make Canada a 'Native land' to settlers and immigrants" (77). Laurence foregrounds that presence in order to establish that 'Native land' for the settler. *The Diviners*, then, might be said to draw upon the presence of Natives in order to establish a nation that belongs to descendants of the British Isles and yet manages and contains the "diversity" implicit within the emerging multicultural framework of Canada.

Laurence's *The Diviners* works against imperial and patriarchal domination through the romantic relationship between Brooke Skelton, an imperial and patriarchal figure, and Morag Gunn. Brooke's past as a colonial in India and his infantilizing treatment of Morag reveal that Brooke's and Morag's relationship is an allegory for the imperial relationship between dominant and dominated countries. Morag's departure from Brooke signifies both Canada's departure from Britain and woman's departure from patriarchy. Interestingly, Morag is aligned with imperialism through her invocation of the Canadian pioneer woman, Catherine Parr Traill. That Parr Traill is of British heritage and that she would have been influenced by the *Canada First Movement* attest to this view. Importantly, however, Morag ultimately abandons Parr Traill as she abandons Brooke Skelton earlier in the novel, suggesting a severing of Morag's and Canada's ties to Britain and patriarchy. Laurence further challenges imperialist and patriarchal values by re-creating various Canadian histories and by interweaving fact and fiction with regard to those histories. Laurence re-imagines history as a melding of different perspectives and life-views.

Significantly, *The Diviners* not only reveals Laurence's anti-imperialist and feminist beliefs, but also her nationalist ones. Laurence posits a unified Canada by bringing together the settler-descendant, Morag Gunn, with nature, Canada's past, and Natives. Laurence therefore constructs for Morag an indigenous Canadian identity. In a sense, the Native in *The Diviners* is the Other that makes the settler whole. In this regard, it is not surprising that the character Laurence creates to re-unite with the Indigene is a woman. Women, according to the West, are naturally close to nature: the jungles of Africa, the land of Canada, and the Native peoples who are conflated with it. The novel implies that the rift that separates the penetrating, invasive settler from nature and the indigene can be bridged with the help of a white woman, and specifically, with the character of Morag Gunn. While Laurence hopes for such a united nation, however, that hope is not conclusively realized in *The Diviners.* The author posits the future nation in the Scots-Métis character of Pique, but also points out the "old patterns" (446) of discrimination against her. Essentially, the novel is a call for cross-cultural understanding and the coming together of all peoples in the nation, even as it realizes the seeming impossibility of that unification and shows the entrenchment of racism there. Problematic and still predominant, the novel argues, are British and American cultural traditions and practices in Canada.

The novel is particularly interesting when read in relation to English-Canadian nationalism in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when Laurence was writing the novel, and in relation to emerging multiculturalism in Canada. Laurence presents the historical stories of Christie Logan and Jules and Lazarus Tonnerre as counter to official Canadian narratives. And yet, *The Diviners*, as a whole, one might argue, adheres to dominant narratives regarding Canada's national imaginary. Laurence unwittingly responds to Anglo-Canadian fears of incoming immigrants to Canada via Canada's new open-door policy: she posits the specifically Scots settler as being "at home" in Canada. Laurence explicitly addresses First Nations—and specifically the Métis people—in her novel. Unlike the Multiculturalism Act, which denies and excludes indigenous peoples, Laurence addresses the Métis and works against the idea—set forth in 1968 with the abolishment of the Indian Act—that aboriginals are and should be assimilated into Anglo-Canadian society. At the same time, however, influenced by the European dictum of *terra nullius* (Day 117), she posits the Métis as at one with the Canadian landscape and as that with which the settler-descendant must bond in order to become whole. Working within and against nationalist discourses of the time, Laurence resists an alignment with the imperial centre of Britain as she establishes a new centre in the nation of Canada.

Most intriguing are the ways in which *The Diviners* challenges moments when Laurence is aligned with imperialist values. The considerable presence of the Tonnerre family in the novel, for example, and especially the continual questioning of Morag's values by her Scots-Métis daughter, Pique, qualifies the notion that settler-descendants of the British Isles and First Nations can unproblematically come together. Such moments in the text also challenge the idea that Canada is for the settler-descendant of the British Isles. Pique, for example, explicitly contests Morag's Anglo perspective when she reiterates her treatment at school in Canada: "What do you know of it?," she states, "You've never been called a dirty halfbreed" (446). Morag's subsequent realization that the school in England was preferable, since it was "full of Pakistani and African and West Indian kids" (446), suggests that Canada, as a nation, is far from the celebratory, multicultural ideal that—during the writing of *The Diviners*—it purported to be. Similarly, Morag's statement that "the old patterns" of discrimination (446) that the Tonnerres experienced when she was a child re-surface suggests that racism is still present in Canada. Trudeau's new multiculturalism as set forth in the White Paper in 1971, Laurence subtly implies, has changed neither British culture in Canada nor the imperial and racist values implicit within it. Finally, that Jules's brother Paul dies at the hands of a racist Canadian government (363, 455), suggests that the novel contests the denial of racism and the effacement of First Nations in Canada. *The Diviners* exemplifies how Laurence is caught up in a Canadian nationalist rhetoric that posits Canada apart from Britain and a rhetoric that begins to consider Canada multicultural. While Laurence at times reveals an imperialist, Anglo-Canadian perspective, the novel, implicitly, challenges that perspective. It is as if, through the Tonnerre family, the novel paradoxically challenges the very imperialist ideology within which it is embedded. Ultimately, Laurence's *The Diviners divines* the Canadian nation in order to imagine it otherwise.

Chapter Five

'He Who Pays the Piper Calls the Tune': Laurence's Politics in the Essays of *Heart of a Stranger* and in her Correspondence with Imperial Oil

This chapter examines the essays in Margaret Laurence's *Heart of a Stranger* (1976) and her correspondence with Imperial Oil in 1974 in the context of Western and patriarchal ideologies. In the previous chapter, I discuss how Laurence posits a unified Canadian nation by uniting the main character of *The Diviners*, Morag Gunn, with nature, Canada's past, and aboriginal peoples. Laurence's novel therefore enacts what she states at the end of her *Heart of a Stranger* essay, "Man of Our People," that settler descendants in Canada "must hear native peoples' voices *and ultimately become part of them*" (166, my emphasis). Just as Laurence posits Morag Gunn, a Canadian settler-descendant, as one who is close to the Canadian landscape and aboriginal peoples, so Laurence posits herself in this way in the essays of *Heart* and in her correspondence with Imperial Oil. This chapter therefore furthers the discussion of the previous one by looking at the ways in which Laurence presents herself in relation to a dominant Western ideology.

In the section entitled "Margaret Laurence, Africa, and the Garden of Eden Narrative," in chapter one of my dissertation, I consider Cooper and Stoler's argument in *Tensions of Empire* (1997) and Donna Haraway's argument in *Primate Visions* (1989). According to these scholars, the West, in response to the Industrial Revolution and the threat of nuclear war post World War Two, begins to idealize nature as that which is lost in the service of technology and scientific advancement. The West longs to return to an innocence configured in nature, the kingdom of Africa, and, in psychoanalytic terms, it longs to return to the woman and the mother. This notion is important to the argument set forth in this chapter. In *Heart of a Stranger,* and especially in essays such as "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," Laurence situates herself, as compassionate woman and mother, as one who is close to the earth and must fight the interracial troubles of North America. Further, she calls upon other Westerners, and particularly women and mothers, to help heal the broken globe. In her correspondence with Imperial Oil, Laurence refuses to align herself with the technology and "progress" that is represented by Imperial Oil. In opposition to that company, the author presents herself as being at one with the land and the peoples whom Imperial Oil exploits.

On the one hand, Laurence's self-alignment with the Canadian landscape and aboriginal peoples plays into the Western ideology that Cooper, Stoler, and Haraway discuss. On the other hand, however, Laurence's self-alignment is, in and of itself, a resistance to imperial and patriarchal aims. In "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," for instance, Laurence critiques the racism and imperialism implicit in American military forces. She overtly opposes the technology and "progress" of the American military and rejects its domination of peoples. In her correspondence with Imperial Oil, Laurence reveals that she will not write a television script for a company that exploits Canada's natural resources and dominates aboriginal peoples. Laurence therefore enacts her anti-imperialist beliefs in her political essays in *Heart of a Stranger* and in her refusal to write for Imperial Oil.

The Essays of *Heart of a Stranger*[26]

As Nora Foster Stovel points out in her introduction to the 2003 edition of the text, Margaret Laurence's *Heart of a Stranger* has received very little critical attention (xi). Such neglect might be due to the fact that the book was originally published in

1976, and was out of print for twenty-seven years. The essays, which, as Stovel explains in her introduction, chronicle Laurence's travels to places such as Egypt, Scotland, and Greece (xi), are as relevant today as when Laurence wrote them. They exemplify Laurence's stance toward contemporary issues such as the imperialist and racist practices of the police and the military and Western development and tourism in foreign countries. As such, they provide an ideal place from which to understand Laurence as a specifically political writer.

This chapter primarily discusses three essays from *Heart of a Stranger:* "Sayonara, Agamemnon" (1966), "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass" (1968), and "A Place to Stand On" (1970). I focus on these particular essays because they most explicitly exemplify Laurence's anti-imperial and feminist outlook and her stance as a Canadian in the wake of globalization. I also focus on these essays because each of them addresses a different aspect of and context for Laurence's politics: "Sayonara, Agamemnon" discusses the problem of Western development in foreign lands; "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass" addresses Laurence's belief that Canada must distinguish itself from the imperial power of America; and "A Place to Stand On" exemplifies Laurence's sense of self as a Canadian prairie person with Scots-Presbyterian roots. I discuss the essays in the order of their original publication dates, not in the order in which they appear in the collection. I end with a discussion of "A Place to Stand On," even though it appears first in *Heart of a Stranger*, because it most forcefully demonstrates Laurence's important and yet problematic centering of herself and settler-descendants in Canada as particularly Canadian. The first and last essays in the collection, "A Place to Stand On" and "Where the World Began," frame the collection and seem to delineate Laurence's strong sense of personal and national identity.

The essay entitled "Sayonara, Agamemnon" was originally published in the American travel magazine, *Holiday,* in 1966, and later in *Heart of a Stranger*. The essay is a brilliant travel narrative in which Laurence recounts her and her husband Jack's journey on a tour bus through Greece. In many ways, the essay comments more on the culture of the "tour bus" than on Greek culture itself. The title of the essay encapsulates the juxtaposition of the tourists on the bus and the ancient places they visit: "Sayonara" refers to a Japanese family which teaches fellow travelers that greeting; and "Agamemnon" refers to the legendary Greek figure whom Laurence considers as she views the place where he fell. Laurence explains how the tourist industry presents the people of Greece and certain sites within it as unchanging and ancient. In so doing, she emphasizes the mobility of the Westerner, and she critiques the very culture of which she is a part. Most interestingly, Laurence addresses the problematic and deliberate separation between the tourists and the local people upon whom the tourists gaze. Laurence draws our attention to the ways in which the tourist industry at once intrudes upon and remains distinct from the lives of the local people.

Laurence's description of the tour bus as it moves through Greek villages highlights the separation between tourists and locals. Laurence emphasizes the constant presence of Western tourists in the locals' daily lives when she states, "People did not bother to look up as we passed, for the tour buses zoomed along here every few minutes" (17). Yet Laurence also foregrounds the imposed separation between tourists and locals when she calls the tour bus "our metal-and glass bubble" (17) and contrasts the "ease and speed" of the bus with "the local farmers' way of travel, which was by donkey" (13). Laurence thus demonstrates that the tourists' high-class and comfortable life-style is largely unavailable to the locals, even though the tourists are ever-present in the locals' lives. Most interestingly, Laurence discusses how tourists attempt to take photographs which would render the local life absolutely separate from the tourism that infiltrates it. She relates, for example, how her husband, Jack, attempts to take a picture of the Olympic Arch, but cannot because a "denim-clad American boy" is in the way (17). When Laurence tells her husband to take the picture anyway, the boy turns around. "Today was facing Today," Laurence remarks, "and they were both holding cameras aimed at each other" (17).

In "White privilege and looking relations: Race and gender in feminist film theory" (1999), Jane Gaines states that "some groups have historically had the license to 'look' openly while other groups have 'looked' illicitly." (301). The encounter between Jack and the "denim-clad American boy" at the Olympic Arch is particularly intriguing in relation to Gaines' statement. The photographs that tourists desire in "Sayonara, Agamemnon" do not include Westerners or other tourists, just as the photographs of Joe Bass and the Vietnamese mother and child that Laurence describes in "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass" also do not include Westerners, as we will see. That the American boy is in the way of Jack's view of the arch challenges the unwarranted belief that Greece is ancient, unchanging, free from modern influence. That the American boy turns around and points his camera back at Jack suggests that the boy refuses to be the object of the tourists' gaze. Unlike the photographs depicted in "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," where the African-American boy and the Vietnamese woman and child do not look at the camera, the American boy here "looks back" in confrontation. While tourists, to use Gaines' theory, might have license to "look openly" at local peoples, they might not have license to "look openly" at each other. To look back in confrontation is to expose the presence behind the camera. It is to reveal that photographers construct the objects of their gaze. It is to reveal, in essence, that the object of the tourists' gaze is, at least to some extent, fabricated. With her reference to this incident, then, Laurence highlights the tourists' failure to re-create a Greece that exists apart from the infiltration of modern tourism.

In her essay "Road from the Isles," in *Heart of a Stranger*, Laurence makes the following statement about Highlanders and the tourist industry:

> What he [the Highlander] really was, in the past, is not comprehended by anyone outside his own tribe, but he has been taken up and glamourized and is expected to act a part. The Dance of the Ancestors—slicked-up, prettified, and performed forever in the same way. [...] The tourists are paying to be provided with an embodiment of their own fantasy. The local populace must surely sometimes want to say, "Look, it's not that way, not at all." (120)

In "Sayonara, Agamemnon," as we have seen, Laurence critiques the tourist industry's tendency to deny their intrusion into local lives and landscapes. In the above quotation from "Road from the Isles," she explicitly states how tourism constructs the local populace as that which they are not. Laurence condemns tourism's fabrication of local landscapes and peoples as apart from the destructive forces of development.

If Laurence argues that the tourist industry constructs locals in a particular, fabricated way, then she does so, interestingly, by separating herself from those who do that constructing. Just as Laurence views herself as separate from the British colonialists in *A Prophet's Camel Bell*, so she views herself as separate from the other tourists in Greece. In the introduction to "Sayonara, Agamemnon," for example, Laurence states that she "had seldom been a tourist," and that, in Africa, she and her husband, Jack, were "outsiders, strangers," but not tourists (11). Moreover, she begins the piece ironically by poking fun at the title of the tour they are about to take, "the Four Day Ultra Classical Tour" (11). Unlike the other tourists, Laurence implies, she and Jack are aware of the absurdity of the construction of Greece as such. Throughout the essay, Laurence pokes fun at the other tourists, who are preoccupied with their own comfort in a foreign land. This preoccupation with one's own comfort is particularly evident in Laurence's description of Mrs. Webster, an American woman who traveled to Africa and was appalled by the state of the roads there (13). Her husband, Mrs. Webster states, "did not mind the discomfort one scrap. [...] For thirty years he had been mad to see Africa, and now thank goodness he had seen it" (13).

While Laurence clearly distinguishes herself from the other tourists, however, there are moments in the essay where she realizes that she cannot do so completely. In her discussion of Nick, the tour guide, for instance, she says that "In the winter he painted watercolours of ruined temples, which his wife sold to the January foreigners (12). Laurence draws attention to Nick's statement that such foreigners "didn't like to consider themselves tourists," even though they were. She therefore demonstrates an awareness that the Laurences—despite their resistance to the label—are also tourists by virtue of their privileged presence as mobile Westerners in a foreign land. Jack's attempt to take a picture of the Olympic Arch without the "denim-clad American boy" in the way also demonstrates how the Laurences, like the other tourists, are influenced by and repeat the construction of Greece as apart from modern influence. At the end of the essay, Laurence imagines and attempts to align herself with ancient Greek women and the Greek landscape that she visits, recalling the myth of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, and seeing the "red poppies" in the field as the "newly spilled blood" of Clytemnestra's daughter. Ultimately, however, as she is jolted back to the present day by the call of a fellow tourist, Laurence cannot exempt herself from the tour's intrusion into the land. "Our initiation was over," she states. "We were qualified tourists" (21).

The essay entitled "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass" was published in 1968 in *MacLean's* magazine and was subsequently published in a collection of essays about Canadian perspectives on Americans titled *The New Romans* (1968) and edited by Al Purdy. It was also published, of course, in *Heart of a Stranger*. In this essay, Laurence discusses two newspaper photographs in order to critique American police who shoot Joe Bass, an African-American boy, and the American military that bomb Vietnamese civilians during the Vietnam war. The first newspaper article on the shooting of Joe Bass states that the African-American boy was shot directly in the neck and that the police were aiming at Bass's friend, whose only crime was stealing a six-pack of beer. Addressing Joe Bass's mother, and speaking from the perspective of a mother, Laurence calls for an end to such acts of violence and racism by the state. The newspaper article and photograph of Joe Bass remind Laurence of another newspaper photo. This photo is that "of a North Vietnamese woman trying to wipe napalm from the face of her child" (Stovel, "Heart of a Traveler," xxvi). Speaking again from the perspective of a mother who is moved by this photograph, Laurence criticizes the violence and racism that the American state and its military employ.

In a book-length study entitled *Reading National Geographic* (1993), Catherine A. Lutz and Jane L. Collins state that "all war photography can potentially suggest parallels between gun and camera" (100). Such a parallel between gun and camera is evident in Laurence's description of the newspaper photograph of Joe Bass, whose face is photographed straight on immediately after he is shot dead by police: "He was lying on the sidewalk, and his eyes were open [...]. He was bleeding, and one of his hands lay languidly outstretched in a spillage of blood" (158). While absent from the photograph themselves, the killer, the photographer, and the reader are aligned in subject position. The killer and photographer foreground Joe Bass's dead body while making themselves absent from view. A similar vantage point is evident in Laurence's description of the photo of the Vietnamese woman and child. Just as the killer and photographer are absent form the photo of Joe Bass, so the American military is absent from the photograph of the Vietnamese woman and child that Laurence describes. The photograph elides the power relationship between the American military and the Vietnamese people and replaces it with a focus on the relationship between mother and child. This elision is particularly interesting in light of Lutz and Collins' argument that in 1968—which was the same year that "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass" was published in *MacLean's*—"popular American protest against participating in the Vietnam War reached a critical point" (206). Magazines such as *National Geographic*, Lutz and Collins point out, stopped including Westerners in photographs of Vietnam because the public did not support the American presence there (206). In "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," it is precisely this absence of the perpetrator that Laurence critiques. The elision of the presence and power of the American police force and military in such photographs alleviates such organizations from responsibility. As Laurence puts it, "The wheels turn, but no one admits to turning them [. . .]. The fantasy is taking over, like the strangler vines of the jungle taking over the trees. It is all happening on TV [. . .]. Except that it isn't" (159). Laurence's essay, then, is quite explicitly anti-imperialist. The people involved in the American police force and military, Laurence asserts, must be accountable for the violence and racism they perpetuate both at home and abroad.

"Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass" might be read not only as an anti-imperialist stance against American police and military systems, but also as nationalist. Since the essay was originally written for a collection of essays by Canadians about America, it implicitly suggests that Canadians must take a stand, as peace-keepers, in relation to America's dominant imperialist and patriarchal practices. As mentioned in chapter one of this dissertation, Donna Bennett explains how, throughout the 1970s, the view that Canada must affirm itself as a nation was being challenged by the idea that Canada must embrace pluralism and not adhere to a singular identity. As Neil Besner and Smaro Kamboureli point out, however, such a view is problematic, since it situates Canada as superior to other nations—as a nation, that is, that matures from a colony of Britain, to an independent country, and, finally, to a multicultural country that must help others achieve tolerance and cross-cultural understanding (40, 44). Laurence's essay employs the notion that Canada is a progressive and mature country that has achieved a kind of tolerance and postcoloniality that America has not.

Laurence's stance against American police and military systems is not only evident in the essays of *Heart of a Stranger*, but also in documents concerning her political activism. In a newspaper article entitled "Call for halt to missile parts manufacture, author urges," appearing in the Toronto star on October 3rd, 1982, columnist John Munch reports Laurence's statement that "Canadians should pressure the federal government to ban test flights of the U.S. cruise missile in Canada and to halt production of parts for the missile here." Likewise, in a panel statement for a conference called "Operation Dismantle" (1982), Laurence states that "Social services are being cut drastically in America, and may soon be cut in our own country," while "550 billion dollars are spent world-wide on armaments including nuclear arms, and the sum is increasing." With regard to this kind of government priority, Laurence says that, for her, "this is not only insanity [...] it is brutality."

In Laurence's statements in the Toronto Star article and in the "Operation Dismantle" panel, the author demonstrates how Canada is dominated by America: Laurence draws attention to the use of Canadian soil as testing ground for American missiles and to the fact that Canada, following America's example, may cut back its social programs. Exemplifying not only anti-imperialist beliefs but also nationalist ones, she voices the concern she later articulates in "Ivory Tower, Or Grass Roots?: The Novelist as Socio-political Being" (1978)—her concern that Canada is "now under the colonial sway of America" ("Ivory Tower," 15). She also reiterates the notion that Canada must resist such colonization and assert its independence and its stance toward cross-cultural understanding. Thus, Laurence repeats the problematic notion, as Donna Bennet puts it, that Canada has progressed, or must progress, from colonized country to independent and postcolonial nation. Canada must stand as an example, Laurence implies, against America's "insanity" and "brutality." Laurence's notion that Canada is dominated by America is also somewhat problematic, since Anglo-Canadians certainly do not experience imperialism in the same ways that those from colonized countries or First Nations in Canada do. However, while Laurence enacts such problematic notions, she simultaneously asserts her sincere humanitarian belief that war and violence against peoples must end. She works against imperialism even as she is unwittingly embedded in its discourse and ideology.

Even as Laurence views Canada as somewhat superior to and more multicultural than America, she still recognizes and works against imperialism in her own country. That Laurence is concerned with social services being cut "in our own country" demonstrates her awareness, not only of America's exploitation of Canada, but also of Canada's exploitation of its own people. Likewise, as a letter from Christine Judge of the Socialist Rights Defense Fund to Laurence reveals, Laurence stands against police systems in Canada as well as in America. The letter thanks Laurence for her support "for the legal initiative of Ross Dowson in his suit against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police." As an article in the April 1978 issue of the New Democratic Party newspaper, *The Commonwealth,* explains, Ross Dowson takes the RCMP to court for slander "arising out of that force's secret spying activities in Canada and, specifically, the New Democratic Party" ("Slander action launched"). Laurence's support for this lawsuit shows that she works not only against the domination of peoples of one country over peoples of another, and also against the domination of peoples within a single nation.

As mentioned in chapter one of this dissertation, in *Primate Visions* (1993), Donna Haraway suggests that, after World War Two, there was a Western desire to go back to nature, primates in Africa, in order to reconnect with an idyllic past. At the historical moment when the West feels threatened by the possibility that humans could destroy the earth with nuclear war, it desires a movement back in time to an imagined nature or garden of Eden with which it hopes to bond. It is particularly noteworthy, then, that Laurence, a woman who has written extensively about Africa—that continent which is figured by the West as a garden of Eden—now writes against racist American police and military systems and against American missile testing in Canada and in support of nuclear disarmament. Laurence's statement, in *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* that she and Jack go to Africa "to simplify, to return to the pioneer's uncomplicated struggle" (11), is here reinforced by her work against Western progression and the scientific advancement of nuclear arms. Importantly, while Laurence works against such imperialist aims, in "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," she calls upon other Western women and particularly mothers to join in her struggle. The essay, which ends with the statement, "I am afraid for all of our children" (160), repeats the notion that Western women must "mother" the earth and its peoples. Like the first-wave British feminists that Antoinette Burton and Margaret Strobel discuss, and like the first-wave Canadian feminists that Roberta Hamilton discusses, Laurence posits women and mothers as those who must heal the broken and troubled world. Hence, as Laurence sincerely works against imperialism and toward cross-cultural understanding, she is problematically caught up in rhetoric that posits the Western woman and mother as superior, as those who must aid people in less fortunate countries of the world.

Laurence's "A Place to Stand On" was published in the Canadian literary journal, *Mosaic*, in 1970, and again in *Heart of a Stranger*. In the essay, which takes its title from a phrase from Al Purdy's poem entitled "Robin Mills, Circa 1842," Laurence locates her own world vision in her roots in a small prairie town. "Whatever I am was shaped and formed in that sort of place [Manawaka]" (9) she states. "My way of seeing, however much it may have changed over the years, remains in some enduring way that of a small-town prairie person" (9). Laurence's emphasis on small-town Canadian life is prevalent in her work, and yet Laurence rarely idealizes that life. Reverend Jim Penhale addresses the significance of the small prairie town in Laurence's writing. In a sermon to his congregation at Margaret Laurence's own United Church in Neepawa, Manitoba, at the time of the author's death, he states:

> As Margaret held up a mirror to reflect life in a small prairie town, we found that the images were not always flattering. Sometimes they were brutal, sometimes crude, and frequently frightening. We identified sometimes too closely with the characters in the novels. And through her stories, we saw parts of our own nature that we would rather avoid acknowledging.

Laurence writes out of the place from which she came, not in order to glorify it, but in order to demonstrate its reality: its racism, for example, as exemplified in the Tonnerre family in the Manawaka series; and its patriarchy, as exemplified in her exposure, for example, of the child abuse Eva Winkler and her brother experience in *The Diviners*.

Although Laurence locates her world vision in her roots as a prairie person, however, she also believes, as she explains in "A Place to Stand On" through a quote by Graham Greene, that the writer must illustrate "his private world in terms of the great public world we all share" (5). Such a viewpoint is evident in the essays of *Heart of a Stranger*, in Laurence's Canadian writing, and also in her correspondence. In a letter to Marian Engel written in 1978, Laurence explains how angry and hurt she is that author Rudy Wiebe, in a *MacLean's* article about him, states that Laurence "hasn't lived on the prairies since she was a kid":

> Is he saying that my work, and Kroetsch's, have no "presence," no "range of experience," and that we write with the viewpoint of "a child, an adolescent," and that this interesting state of affairs is because we have lived away from our native birthplaces? Ye gods!! I really cannot believe that my years in England and Africa did anything but give me somewhat a broader view into what one might term the human dilemma. And what else are novelists writing about? It doesn't matter where.[27]

Laurence not only insists that her history in the Canadian prairies is tied to who she is, but also that her time away from the prairies has made her more open-minded, more able to understand other peoples. Yet, the land of the Canadian prairies, Laurence asserts in "Where the World Began," "still draws [her] more than other lands" (173). Canadian settler-descendants must, Laurence implies, become part of that land and must become part of the Native peoples who inhabit it ("Man of Our People," 166). That coming together, she suggests, enables settler-descendants like Laurence herself to work toward cross-cultural understanding.

Laurence clearly articulates how she feels at one with the place from which she comes. In "A Place to Stand On," for instance, she states that "Writing, for me, has to be set firmly in some soil, some place, some outer and inner territory" (9); and in "Where the World Began," she asserts that the prairie landscape "formed [her]" (174). Laurence's insistence that one must remember and return to one's past is anti-imperialist, for it counters a forgetting of the genocide of First Nations peoples in Canada as it counters a forgetting of life before modernization. While a return to one's past in a small prairie town might be a return to that which is configured in the garden of Eden, mother Earth, and, quite literally, childhood innocence, in Laurence's case, it is not exclusively so. In some instances, Laurence does idealize the prairies and the history there. Just as Matthew, in the *Tomorrow-Tamer* story, "The Drummer of All the World," desires a return to the old Africa and his lost childhood, so Laurence, in many of the *Heart of a Stranger* essays and in her fiction, returns to the pioneer life of a small town and her childhood experiences there. Matthew's old Africa is "The giant heartbeat of the night drums. The flame tree whose beauty is suddenly splendid" (19), just as Laurence's Canadian prairie includes the Northern Lights that "[flare] across the sky [...] like the scrawled signature of God" (170). Although Laurence occasionally idealizes the prairies, however, she predominantly exposes small-town prairie life for what it is. As she puts it in "Where the World Began," "The town of my childhood could be called [...] agonizingly repressive or cruel at times, and the land in which it grew could be called harsh [...]. But never merely flat or uninteresting. Never dull" (170).

If, as Laurence says in "A Place to Stand On," her writing, as well as the writing of many others, "involves an attempt to understand one's background and one's past, sometimes a more distant past which one has not personally experienced" (6), then her writing addresses not only her own background in a prairie town, but also that of her pioneer ancestors. Thus, just as Matthew, in "The Drummer of All the World," engages in what Renato Rosaldo calls "Imperialist Nostalgia"—a Western longing, ironically, for that which the West has destroyed—so too does Laurence. Moreover, to remember, and, indeed, to become one with a pioneer past, is to create for oneself an indigenous identity. In essays such as "A Place to Stand On" and "Where the World Began," then, Laurence enacts Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson's theory in "Settler Colonies" (2000). As Johnston and Lawson explain, since settlers can never quite mimic the culture from which they have been displaced, they create for themselves an identity that is indigenous to the new country. In Canada, such an identity is embodied and idealized in figures such as the Mountie and the pioneer. In terms of this Western discourse and construction of the indigene, Laurence's return to her prairie and pioneer roots is what makes her truly Canadian.

The essays of Margaret Laurence's *Heart of a Stranger* are important to an understanding of Laurence's corpus of African and Canadian writing. In "A Place to Stand On," Laurence connects her return to her ancestors' pioneer past with African writers' return to their past. Many African writers, Laurence asserts, return to their pasts "in order to recover a sense of themselves, an identity and a feeling of value from which they were separated by two or three generations of colonialism and missionizing" (6). Similarly, in "The Poem and the Spear" a *Heart of a Stranger* essay about Somaliland leader Sayyid Mahammed 'Abdille Hasan, Laurence compares that historic figure with the Métis leader Louis Riel. Laurence understands different imperial situations in relation to one another. In "Sayonara, "Agamemnon," the author critiques Western development and challenges the notion that it is separate from the "ancient" lands and peoples it takes as its specimens. In "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," Laurence urgently states that people must work together to end oppression, and she strongly asserts that Canada must take a stand apart from its American neighbour. In "A Place to Stand On," Laurence situates herself as a Canadian with small-town prairie roots, a Canadian who, it may be noted, remembers and recounts a pioneer past that includes the histories of settlers and First Nations peoples. In the essays of *Heart of a Stranger,* Laurence essentially exemplifies her strong political beliefs against imperialism and patriarchy as they manifest themselves in America, Canada, and the world.

The Correspondence with Imperial Oil

In November of 1974, Richard Nielsen, the producer of the television and film company Nielsen-Ferns Ltd., writes a letter to Margaret Laurence, asking her to write a script for a new television series on Canadian Settlers. It is to be titled, "A New Land.' Laurence turns down Nielsen's offer. "If the series [...] is to be funded by Imperial Oil," Laurence states in her letter of reply, "my personal feeling is that for me to write for such a series would be to give my tacit approval to that corporation's exploitation of our natural resources, and that I am unwilling to do." In February of 1975, Gordon Hinch from the Public Affairs Department of Imperial Oil writes to Laurence. Hinch's letter, which he claims speaks for "the fifteen thousand other Canadians who work for [Imperial Oil]," and which is stamped with bold Imperial Oil letterhead, is a detailed explanation of Imperial Oil's place in Canada's history and future. Near the end of the letter, he expresses his wish for Laurence to change her mind about writing for the series. Laurence's response is physically embedded within the letter itself. She rips it into pieces and carefully tapes it back together in order to place it in the York University Archives.

Both Imperial Oil and Nielsen-Ferns are disturbed by Laurence's refusal. They are also committed to having Laurence, rather than another Canadian author, write the series. That they express anxiety at the lack of Laurence's support is not surprising in light of the OPEC crisis that was taking place at the time. That they solicit Laurence to write a program they are funding, and that they choose to write a program on Canadian settlers and title it "A New Land" is also not surprising. Faced with both an economic crisis and a crisis in how the company is being represented in the media, Imperial Oil attempts to portray their company as sensitive to the environment and integral to the country. What better figure to represent them than a Canadian literary icon? What better figure than a woman who is loved by Canadians, and who, in both her African and Canadian works, exemplifies sensitivity to, understanding of, and communication with Africans and First Nations? What better content to appeal to white Canadian citizens than that of those citizens' own history and origin, a romanticized myth of national and personal beginning?

In this chapter I explore the ways in which imperial and patriarchal language and values are embedded within the letters from Imperial Oil and Neilsen-Ferns. I also examine why Margaret Laurence is a particularly fitting figure to represent these companies' imperial aims. Most importantly, I consider how Laurence resists the imperial aims of those companies and refuses to represent those companies. As we have seen, in Laurence's *The Diviners,* and in her *Heart of a Stranger* collection, Laurence enacts what she says in "Man of Our People," that settler descendents in Canada must come together with Native peoples (166). She creates for settler-descendents of Canada, in Johnston and Lawson's terms, an indigenous identity embodied in figures such as the

Mountie and the pioneer. Likewise, as we have seen, Laurence's work enacts what Stoler and Cooper discuss in *Tensions of Empire* (1993), and what Donna Haraway discusses in *Primate Visions* (1989). As these theorists explain, in Judeo-Christian teleology, the search for origins is a desire to return to nature, paradise, or the garden of Eden. As I have pointed out in chapter one of my dissertation, in the language of psychoanalysis, this search is a desire to return to the body of the woman and the mother. Laurence's writing, which, as she states in "A Place to Stand On," is "an attempt to understand [her] background and [her] past" (6), is thus an attempt to go back to such origins. While Laurence plays into such Western discourses in her writing, aligning herself with the feminine and with nature rather than with technology and progress, she refuses to do so in the interests of a multi-national company such as Imperial Oil. While Laurence often unwittingly represents herself and is represented by others as being at one with "mother Earth," she has the agency to resist that kind of representation. In her correspondence with Imperial Oil, this chapter argues, it is precisely this representation that she so passionately negates.

In order to understand Laurence's correspondence with Imperial Oil, it is important to consider the historical context within which it was written. The mid-1970s was a tactical time for Imperial Oil to solicit Laurence as their representative because the company and the oil industry in Canada were going through a crisis. In *Oil, the State, and Federalism* (1997), John Erik Fossum explains the events leading up to the oil crisis in Canada in the mid-1970s. From World War Two until the early 1970s, he explains, multi-national corporations dominated the world oil market and Canada's energy policy. While Diefenbaker set up the National Energy Policy (NEP) is 1961, the policy did not impede foreign owned oil companies in Canada. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, four large, multi-national oil companies became very powerful in Canada. Imperial Oil, Gulf Canada, Shell, and Texaco "were the key landholders, oil explorers, producers, marketers, refiners, and owners and operators of the pipelines and the refineries" (27). In 1971, however, Middle Eastern countries that exported oil sought to gain control over their own natural resources and formed the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). In 1973—just one year before Imperial Oil solicited Margaret Laurence to write their television series—OPEC put an embargo on oil, and the price of oil began to rise. According to Fossum, the intention of this embargo, at least initially, was to persuade Western countries to force Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories. In an attempt to regain control and oppose OPEC, Western nations formed the International Energy Agency (IEA), but OPEC was successful in regulating the prices of oil from 1973 until the Shah of Iran fell in 1979 (Fossum 29).[28]

The formation and rise of OPEC in the early 1970s not only affected the oil industry in Canada but also Canada's relations with America. In order to protect Canadian consumers from oil shortages, the National Energy Board (NEB) placed export controls on Canadian oil. However, America, reducing its dependence on oil from Middle Eastern countries, notified Ottawa in 1971 that it needed Canadian oil. Throughout the 1960s, America drilled for oil in Alaska, and in 1968 discovered the Prudhoe Bay oilfield (Fossum 31). American exploration for oil in Alaska led to Canadian exploration for oil in the Arctic. Imperial Oil's own publication, "*The Story of Imperial Oil* (198-), describes Imperial's discovery of oil there: "On Jan. 14, 1970, at Atkinson Point north of Tuktoyaktuk on the brink of the Beaufort Sea, the drill struck medium-gravity, low-sulfur crude at 1 700m" (15). Interestingly, Fossum states what Imperial Oil's own publication does not: that Canadian Arctic was to supply energy for America and Canada and would enable those countries to exist independently of OPEC (31). While the America was pressuring Canada to be independent of OPEC, the Canadian public wanted to be independent of America. Much of the Canadian public believed that Canadian oil was being dominated by a corrupt and imperialist United States.

Within Canada, Imperial Oil is a powerful owner of Canadian land and resources. It is implicated in the formation of the IEA and opposed to OPEC; it is a company operating within a Western nation aligned with the United States. Outside of Canada, it is at one with Western nations and opposed to Arab countries who want to resist foreign occupation and exploitation of their home and people. Furthermore, its alignment with America in its pursuit of oil in Alaska and the Arctic—as a way to secure its own oil and resist OPEC—reveals how it exploits its own country's natural resources and contributes to the continuing exploitation of Arab peoples in the occupied territories. Imperial Oil's actions and aims are clearly imperialist.

As the book entitled *The Big Tough Expensive Job: Imperial Oil and the Canadian Economy* (1976)[29] makes clear, Imperial Oil is no innocent player in what we might call modern-day imperialism: the rising control of corporations over peoples of the world. The company, as Edward Shaffer points out in the first chapter of that book, "The Empire of Exxon," is controlled by Exxon Corporation of New York, which owns seventy percent of its stock. Exxon, Shaffer states, "can be viewed as a microcosm of modern capitalism, in general, and *American imperialism*, in particular (my emphasis, 1).

That company's worldwide sales, in 1974, he explains, were the largest of any industrial company in the world. Its sales in that year exceeded the Gross National Products (GNPs) of most countries in the world (1). Shaffer delineates how, through joint ventures, as well as "utter ruthlessness and the use of highly questionable methods," Exxon is able to control the oil supply in the non-communist world (1, 7). During the early 1970s, when the OPEC countries were able to regain control over their own resources, Exxon and the American government sought to create a new surplus of oil. They turned to Canada in order to meet these imperial aims.

If Imperial Oil, as part of Exxon Corporation, is imperialist in its control of oil around the world, then what, we might ask, is its relationship with Canada and Canadians? As James Laxer explains in "Always Look to Imperial for the Best: Imperial Oil and the Canadian Energy Policy" (1976), the company of Imperial Oil began in 1880 and undertook "to establish an organization strong enough to fight off competition from across the border from the Standard Oil Company, the creation of John D. Rockefeller" (21). As Laxer explains, in 1899, "Standard Oil acquired control of Imperial, and Standard's Canadian affiliates were merged with the formerly Canadian company under the new Imperial name" (21). Thus, Imperial Oil has been under the control of America generally, and the Rockefeller family, specifically, since the early twentieth century.

However, Imperial Oil continues to represent itself as quintessentially Canadian. In "The Mismanagement of Canada's Petroleum Resources" (1976), Mel Hurtig states that Imperial Oil "has quite successfully misled a large percentage of Canadians into believing that it is a Canadian company" (55). In "And Now a Word from Our Sponsor," Richard Gathercole and James Laxer delineate how Imperial Oil creates a specifically

Canadian image for itself in the media. Referring to the 1960s Imperial Oil ads during Hockey Night in Canada, the article explains how, "When Murray Westgate, in his Esso dealer's uniform, saluted and told us in his gravelly voice to 'always look to Imperial for the best,' we thought of hockey, the wide open spaces of Canada, and the good life" (159). One need only look as far as Imperial's own serial publication, *The Imperial Oil Review*, to see how the company represents itself as Canadian. Many of the articles in the review are nostalgic towards Canadian pioneer and small-town life. A 1975 publication of the review, for example, includes an article called, "My town," which is a piece about life in a small prairie town, complete with pictures and a caption reading "The smell of prairie land; memories of rich earth, golden oceans of wheat" (8). The serial publication romanticizes small-town life and the Canadian prairies while justifying the destruction of those prairies by Imperial's energy production. It is particularly telling, moreover, that Gordon Hinch of Imperial Oil, in his letter to Laurence, encloses a copy of the latest issue of the review and states, "We all hope you like William French's piece on your work." Imperial Oil clearly creates a fiction for the public, a particularly Canadian myth that entices and seduces citizens so that they might unwittingly support and become complicit in the exploitation of Canada's land and peoples. As Gathercole and Laxer put it, Imperial Oil "sold us far more than Esso gas; they sold us a way of life" (160).

The letter that Gordon Hinch of Imperial Oil writes to Laurence in response to her refusal to write the television script helps to create and sustain the myth that Imperial Oil is Canadian and acts in the best interest of Canadians:

> Forgive me but I can't help wondering how much you really know about this company. Did you know that Imperial Oil was founded by Canadian

> oil men from southwestern Ontario nearly a hundred years ago? Ever since then it's been operated and managed by Canadians. Imperial was one of the first companies in Canada to offer a proper benefits program to its employees—voluntarily I might add—and the story of how it treated its employees during the Great Depression is one that ought to be told sometime. It was the first Canadian company to support Canadian aviation. As a matter of fact, the first planes ever to cross the Canadian arctic circle were Imperial planes.

Even as, later in the letter, Hinch acknowledges Imperial's "American connection," he here argues that the company is truly Canadian. Hinch states that it has "been operated and managed by Canadians"; however, he fails to add that it is owned largely by America, and that it operates, almost solely, in the name of American economic interests.

Despite Imperial Oil's alignment with imperial actions, Hinch attempts to represent the company as anti-imperialist. He posits Imperial as that which is *for* the underdog Canadian, creating a benefits program for its employees and treating them well during the Great Depression. When Hinch refers to Imperial's "American connection," he states that "Imperial Oil sold a majority equity position to Standard Oil" because it was the only company that would provide "risk capital to a Canadian company." Hinch fails to mention, however, that such "risk capital" ultimately leads to, as Shaffer delineates, "joint ventures" and "questionable methods" that result in world oil control. Hinch calls Standard Oil's historical partnership with Imperial a "typically Canadian story." Laurence, I would think, would call it "typically Canadian" insofar as it demonstrates how Canada is dominated not only culturally but also economically by a powerful and imperialist America.

Hinch attempts to represent Imperial Oil as anti-imperialist, yet his references to Canadian aviation and Imperial's planes as the first to cross the Canadian Arctic Circle unwittingly reveal an imperialist motive. As critics such as Smaro Kamboureli and Himani Bannerji have argued, Canada's national imaginary as a white, European settler-colony is constructed upon a threat from within Canada, from that vast, empty, non-human wilderness that is conflated with indigenous peoples. In Hinch's letter, Imperial Oil—a metonymy for the Canadian white man's progress and technological advancement—conquers that threat that is both the wilderness and First Nations people. To state that Imperial Oil is the "first" company to support Canadian aviation is to state that the company is on the leading edge of progress and technology. It is to suggest that Imperial Oil is what the indigenous Canadian is not. Likewise, to assert that Imperial planes are "the first planes ever to cross the Canadian arctic circle" is to posit the company as superior to the land and the Natives over which its planes fly. The planes surmount the land and the Natives even as they remain distanced from them. The progress and technology of the white man defeat the land and the Indigene over which they reside. The Indigene is invoked as everything the white settler and Imperial Oil are not.

The repetition of the word "first," in Hinch's letter—"Imperial was one of the *first* companies in Canada to offer a proper benefits program [...]. It was the *first* Canadian company to support Canadian aviation [...] the *first* planes ever to cross the Canadian arctic circle were Imperial planes" (my emphases)—enacts Johnston and Lawson's theory that settlers, anxious about their inability to mimic the mother country, create for themselves an indigenous identity. Imperial Oil, like the Canadian Mountie or pioneer, is here configured as the first in Canada. Hinch therefore ignores and denies the histories, stories, and beginnings in Canada before the one that the West inaugurates and at which Imperial Oil is present. In this way, the letter becomes the story of the white Canadian as native Canadian, the settler as the "first." While Hinch states that the company was founded "by Canadian Oil men from Southwestern Ontario nearly a hundred years ago," he does not relate how those men encountered and conquered First Nations in order to exploit their land and develop the company. While he portrays the oil company as hard-working and persistent (later in the letter he states that Imperial "kept on exploring" when others did not) he does not explain how "exploring" ultimately amounted to "exploiting," the land, the resources, and the people that the company encountered. It is no wonder that Hinch "hopes" that the television series his company sponsors will be "a permanent contribution to our country's social history." The series as archive documents the white settler and Imperial Oil as original and Canadian. Erasing the presence and history of the Indigene, both Hinch's letter and the television series write Canada's origin story as white.

The production of the television series called "A New Land" about Canadian settlers is a creation and imagining of Canadian history. While such history is often viewed as factual and truthful, it is also a story, a particular version of a past. As Raymond Williams explains, until the fifteenth century, the English language did not distinguish between histories and stories: "It appears that only with the growth of science as the dominant paradigm that history begins to acquire its objective face and continues its quest for progress and universal truths" (quoted in Desai 123). Likewise, the words "fact" and "fiction" have similar epistemological roots—both words appeal to experience

(Haraway 4). Thus, while history and story, fact and fiction are binary oppositions, they are also intricately interwoven. Stories and fictions, histories and facts are produced and constructed even as they embody truth; Hinch's letter to Laurence tells the story of Canada that appears to be fact, even as it does not tell the whole story. Importantly, however, the letter also expresses interest in documenting and archiving that story as fact. What Hinch hopes "will be a permanent contribution to our country's social history" is what will be written and archived as the television series itself. Once written, documented, and produced, the story acquires a kind of truth value that it does not have in oral form. The impetus toward documenting and archiving is a re-enacting of colonial discourse and practice that situates the written word of the colonizer as truth in opposition to the supposedly tenuous and unreliable oral testimony of the Native.[30] Thus, while telling his story of the Canadian past as one that began with the Canadian settler, Hinch repeats a colonial discourse that expels Natives as it produces the settler as the first and rightful Canadian. By writing and documenting his story in the form of a television series, he re-enacts the privileging of the colonizer's written word over the Indigene's oral one.

Even as Hinch argues that his company is the local hero of Canadian oil, his language suggests otherwise. "I think," he explains, "Imperial Oil is almost all of the time an efficient, responsible, enlightened provider of essential commodities." His tentative tone evident in the phrase "I think" and the qualifier "almost" in "almost all of the time" suggest that Imperial is neither as "efficient" nor as "responsible" as Hinch claims. Regarding Laurence's refusal to participate in the project, he says, "I can't tell you how disappointed I was to learn of your decision [. . .]. I find it easier to accept some reasons than others [. . .]. I found your reason very much harder to accept [. . .]. I do wish you would change your mind about writing for our project." The tone of anxiety exemplified here and Hinch's persistence in securing Laurence as the writer of the script show how much Imperial Oil seeks to produce an anti-imperialist and pro-multicultural image for itself. Its almost desperate desire to produce this image is not surprising in light of the OPEC crisis and the fact that many Canadians did not want Canada's oil industry to be part of the Western and imperialist aims of the Americans.

If Imperial Oil and Neilsen-Ferns seek Laurence to represent them, then they do so at a particularly good time in Canadian history. The correspondence between Neilsen-Ferns, Imperial Oil, and Margaret Laurence takes place just a few years after Pierre Elliot Trudeau introduced multiculturalism in his address to the House of Commons in 1971. The address, "the White Paper," was meant to appease the white, ethnic vote. The paper responded to immigrants such as Germans and Ukrainians, who were worried that their cultures would be subsumed into the two official cultures of Canada, English and French. Laurence is an author who is not only sensitive to First Nations in her writing, but also to immigrant experiences and particularly the Scots-Canadian experience. She explicitly takes up the Ukrainian-Canadian experience with the character of Nick in her Manawaka novel entitled *The Fire-Dwellers*. She is therefore an especially suitable representative for a company who seeks a positive, forward-looking, pro-multicultural image for itself. The historical moment when multiculturalism was becoming a state policy was the perfect time for Imperial Oil to solicit Laurence as their representative and, thus, to present an image of itself as sympathetic to Natives and immigrants of Canada.

That Imperial Oil chose Laurence to write the script for its new television series on Canadian Settlers, “A New Land,” just after Trudeau introduced multiculturalism, shows that the company wanted Laurence to do a particular kind of work for them. With her name appearing as author of a television series it would sponsor, Laurence would act as a representative for Imperial Oil. The oil company would thus align itself, and show itself to the public, as a company that is sensitive to Others, as Laurence is in her work. Through Laurence, Imperial Oil would be one with a specifically multicultural Canada. As I have explained, the Middle Eastern countries, through OPEC, put an embargo on oil exports in the early 1970s. Imperial Oil, through its association with Exxon, begins to exploit Canada’s oil in America’s economic interest. At a time when the company is engaging in such exploitation, it must represent itself to the public as otherwise, as sensitive to the land and peoples it ultimately dominates. Imperial Oil seeks to relay a public image of itself as pro-multicultural through its series and the symbolic figure of Laurence as author of that series.

It is particularly noteworthy that Imperial Oil chooses a Canadian who is also a white woman to represent it in its television series. According to the theories outlined by Cooper, Stoler, and Haraway, the West longs to return to nature from which it is barred by technology and progress. The historical moment when Imperial Oil is exploiting Canada’s resources is the moment that it hopes to bond with nature, Canadian landscape, and aboriginal peoples. Just as the West configures woman as closer to nature than man—closer, in Judeo-Christian terms, to the garden of Eden, or, in psychoanalytic terms, to the body of the mother—so Imperial Oil configures Laurence in this way.

In *The Diviners*, Laurence forges a connection between Morag and the Canadian landscape she inhabits and between Morag and the Métis she befriends. She does so by delineating Morag's desire to survive the elements, by delineating Morag's epiphany when she encounters the Great Blue Heron (380), and through Morag's friendship with the Métis character, Jules Tonnerre. In *Heart of a Stranger*, and specifically in "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," Laurence aligns herself with other women and specifically mothers in order to resist American racist and military practices and be at one with nature and Native peoples. Laurence is an author who posits a white woman—Morag in *The Diviners*, herself in "Open Letter"—as one who can bridge the gap between white settlers and First Nations, as one who can mend a troubled Canadian past. For a company such as Imperial Oil that seeks to produce an image of itself as sensitive to its land and people, even as it continues to exploit them, Laurence is a perfect representative. As a white woman, Laurence can stand in for the white Canadian man and reconnect to that which was lost. For the companies of Nielsen-Ferns and Imperial Oil, Laurence is close to nature, landscapes, and the Natives who inhabit them because she is a woman, but also because she is a white woman who explicitly demonstrates that closeness to Others in her writing.

The correspondence between Laurence and Imperial Oil demonstrates how figures such as Laurence might work to produce and reproduce a certain impression—a face for the public—for companies such as Imperial Oil. As Antoinette Burton explains in *Burdens of History* (1994), British feminists in the nineteenth-century worked in India to save the Indian woman from her supposed backward plight. This project produced an image of the white woman and therefore white man as civilized and advanced. In the same way that the British woman stood in for the white man, the company of Imperial Oil in the mid 1970s solicits Laurence to stand in for the white Canadian man. If she had accepted, she would have worked to produce an image of that company as progressive, but also as sensitive to Others and anti-imperialist both within and outside of Canada. Just as Jane Goodall stands in for the white, Western man in an attempt to re-connect with the lost Garden in the new Kingdom of Africa, so Margaret Laurence stands in for the white Canadian man who seeks to return to the pristine and untouched landscape of Canada, to reconnect with Natives even as he continues to deny their presence. Laurence, as a national and literary figure, might represent, especially for companies like Imperial Oil, a softer and gentler imperialism. She substitutes for white "man" as progressive, yet sensitive; expansive, yet tender; technologically advanced, yet ultimately aware of his natural and feminine surroundings.

Unlike women like Jane Goodall (who participates in Gulf Oil's environmental campaign), Laurence refuses to work for and represent Imperial Oil. She will not align herself with such a company. Furthermore, Laurence does not keep her views on the interests of such companies a secret. Responding to Richard Nielsen of Nielsen-Ferns, who worries that Laurence has shown her correspondence with his firm and Imperial Oil to others, she says in a letter to him, "There has been no campaign on my part against your project, and my letter to you has not been shown around at all. My views on the subject of American-owned multinational corporations are, however, no secret and are probably fairly widely known." In addition, after her correspondence with Imperial Oil, Laurence became quite involved in the Public Petroleum Association of Canada (PPAC), which was formed in 1975. As James Laxer and Anne Martin explain,

> The PPAC is a non-partisan organization whose purpose is to advocate a national petroleum policy that serves the interests of Canadians. The sponsors of the PPAC are critics of the petroleum industry as well as Canadians active in politics, the arts, and the labour movement. They believe that an alternative energy policy can only be achieved when the powerful lobby maintained by the oil companies in Ottawa and the provincial capitals has been effectively countered. (xi)

Laurence's ongoing involvement in and financial contribution to the PPAC is testament to her strong belief that multi-national Oil corporations such as Imperial must be challenged.[31]

Laurence's opposition to such companies and her involvement in associations such as the PPAC are connected to her fight for nuclear disarmament. As well as supporting the PPAC, Laurence also supported Energy Probe and the Council for Nuclear Awareness, associations that opposed nuclear energy plants and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In letters to Gordon Lightfoot and Anne Murray asking for those celebrities' support, Laurence clearly states her position:

> Ontario, with vast potential for water power, safe and renewable, is pursuing a policy of proliferating nuclear energy plants. Small water-power plants are being phased out. I do not believe that nuclear energy is necessary, and I am absolutely positive that it is disastrously unsafe, not only in terms of possible accidents at nuclear plants but also in terms of the vast quantities of nuclear wastes which are already poisoning air, soil, and water.

By actively engaging in the pursuit of and implementation of alternate energy sources, Laurence effectively counters Hinch's statement, in his letter to her, that the company does not "exploit resources" but "[supplies] energy" and that "so far no one's found a way of doing that without using a natural resource and using it as wisely and prudently as possible."

Laurence's support for establishing alternate energy sources and her opposition to furthering the production of nuclear energy are also a stance against nuclear war. In a letter from researcher Norman Rubin of Energy Probe to Laurence dated 27 August 1981, Rubin states that "the spread of nuclear reactors facilitates the spread of nuclear weapons—in fact, limiting the latter may be impossible without limiting the former." To stand against Imperial Oil's exploitation of Canada's natural resources is to stand against American imperialism as it manifests itself through the powerful company of Exxon. To stand against the production of nuclear energy, likewise, is to stand against American imperialism as it manifests itself through the conglomeration of weapons and the establishment of America as a world power. Hence, Laurence clearly works against modern imperialist aims in her refusal to represent Imperial Oil and in her active involvement in the pursuit of alternate energy sources.

Laurence's position, as we have seen in my analysis of *The Diviners* in the previous chapter and in my analysis of *Heart of a Stranger* in this chapter, is not only anti-imperialist, but also nationalist. Just as Morag's departure from Brooke, in *The Diviners,* signifies Canada's departure from England, so Laurence's stance against Imperial Oil is representative of many Canadians' stance against American imperialism. Just as Laurence stands against Western tourism in "Sayanora, Agamemnon" and against American military and police systems in "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," so, here, she stands against Canada's foreign policy, which allows American multi-national companies such as Exxon to exploit Canada's natural resources. This stance is not only exemplified through Laurence's correspondence with Imperial Oil, but also, as I have demonstrated, through various letters that reveal the author's passionate involvement in such causes. A letter from Andrew Brewin to Laurence, furthermore, states that Laurence signed a letter on Canada's need for a new foreign policy, a policy that would disallow American nuclear weapons and missiles to be tested in Canada. If, as Himani Bannerji argues, Canada's national imaginary is determined by how Canada distinguishes itself from the imperial power of America (80), then Laurence's position against Imperial Oil and for a Canadian foreign policy that resists American imperialist practices is clearly a nationalist one. As is quite clear in her correspondence and in pieces such as "Ivory Tower, Or Grass Roots?: The Novelist as Socio-political Being" (1978), Laurence forcefully asserts that Canada must stand in unity against American imperialist policies.

If Laurence believes that Canadians must unify to resist American imperialist aims, then she does so through the perspective of a woman and a mother. In her statement for "Women's Petition for Peace" (1982) for example, Laurence states the following:

> The nuclear arms race must cease. Our leaders must realize that they are playing a potentially lethal Game. As Dr. Helen Caldicott has said, "There are no capitalist babies. There are no communist babies. They are babies." They are indeed, and we, who bear the world's children, will not stand by and see them slaughtered. We must all say NO TO WAR.

As in "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," Laurence here invokes her position as mother and thus implies that the military practices she opposes are at once imperialist and patriarchal. It is women and mothers, she states, who must work against the perpetuation of war. Stoler, Cooper, and Haraway assert that Western ideology posits white woman as closer to landscape and the peoples that the West exploits. Laurence adheres to such an ideology when she says that "we, who bear the world's children, will not stand by and see them slaughtered." Through Western women and mothers, Laurence's statement implies, the West can return to an innocence, a garden of Eden that existed before the destruction of land and peoples by technology and progress, by companies such as Exxon and its affiliate, Imperial Oil.

The company of Imperial Oil, as we have seen, presents itself as *for* the Canadian nation. Through its advertisements, it invokes "hockey, the wide open spaces of Canada, and the good life" (Gathercole and Laxer 159). In Hinch's letter to Laurence, Hinch, as a representative of Imperial Oil, also depicts the company as distinctly Canadian. Importantly, Laurence, as we have also seen, is sincerely concerned for Canada and Canadian peoples. *The Diviners*—published in the same year in which Laurence's correspondence with Imperial Oil took place—demonstrates her belief that Canada must separate from both the practice of British cultural traditions and the "colonial sway of America" ("Ivory Tower," 15). However, while Imperial Oil presents itself as quintessentially Canadian, the "Canadian" image it puts forth, as critics such as Shaffer, Gathercole, Laxer, and Hurtig reveal, is nothing but a myth. By contrast, Laurence's concern for Canada and the plight of Canadian peoples is a genuine one. She forcefully resists a company which presents itself as sensitive to the Canadian environment when it is not. Imperial Oil solicits a Canadian woman to write a television script on Canadian settlers because, as Cooper, Stoler, and Haraway assert, a white woman, in Western discourse, is closer to the land and the peoples that white "man" exploits. While Laurence plays into such notions in her writing and in her statement for "Women's Petition for Peace," however, she will not do so in the interests of Imperial Oil. By resisting Imperial Oil, Laurence aligns herself, as she does in her work, with the landscape, other women and mothers, and the Natives over whom Imperial Oil's planes fly. Ironically, it is precisely this kind of alignment that makes Imperial Oil so desperate to secure Laurence as their writer. But Laurence will not play into the myth of Imperial Oil as anti-imperial—a myth that the company, through Laurence, so adamantly maintains.

In an interview with Bernice Lever in 1975, Laurence discusses her views on subsidization and her correspondence with Nielsen-Ferns and Imperial Oil. When asked her opinion on commercial subsidization for literature and art in Canada, she indicates that she feels very suspicious. "There is an old proverb," Laurence points out, "which says, 'He who pays the piper calls the tune.' Subtly, there are always *strings* attached to money given by large corporations" (24-25). Specifically addressing her correspondence with Nielsen and Hinch, she states the following:

> Imperial Oil is doing dire things to our country—exploiting our natural resources, draining a substantial amount of their profits off to America [...]. At the same time, here they *come on strong*, doing a TV series on our early settlers, and obviously trying to create a public image of the corporation as being concerned about our country and our way of life. *And I don't buy it.* (25)

That Margaret Laurence refuses to participate in Nielsen-Ferns' and Imperial Oil's project suggests that she resists the Western discourses that inscribe her as a Canadian public literary figure. While she is written as such a figure—as a woman who is at one with the Canadian landscape, First Nations and immigrants, as a woman who has a history of reconnecting with Others and mother Earth—she does not have to play that role in the interests of Imperial Oil. As we have seen, Western colonial discourses are repeated throughout history: the British viewed the Industrial Revolution in terms of the garden of Eden narrative; the West reacted to post World War Two technology by exemplifying a desire to return to the mother and to nature. Laurence has the agency to resist perpetuating such Western colonial discourses. More importantly, she has the power to resist the perpetuation of the lie that companies like Imperial Oil are sensitive to the environment and the peoples that inhabit it, the perpetuation of the lie that states that such companies are anti-imperial. She expresses that power in her emphatic statement, "*And I don't buy it.*" Judith Butler argues that discourses inscribe and determine our being, and yet, that inscription can be rejected: "bodies [...] never quite comply with the norms by which their materialization is impelled [...] the regulatory law can be turned against itself to spawn rearticulations that call into question the hegemonic force of the very regulatory law" (2). Laurence clearly challenges the ways in which Western discourses, that "regulatory law" of which Butler speaks, write herself as literary figure and the company of Imperial Oil as sensitive and forgiving. If it is true that, as Laurence suggests, "He who pays the piper calls the tune," then it is also true that one can resist alignment with that "He." Laurence will not help to pay this piper. She will not help to create a tune that touts companies who exploit and colonize. She will not participate in an image of Canada that denies and forgets its ongoing imperialist history.

Laurence's *Heart of a Stranger* demonstrates Laurence's strong political beliefs. The three essays in *Heart of a Stranger* that I discuss—"Sayonara, Agamemnon," "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," and "A Place to Stand On"—each reveal a different aspect of Laurence's politics. Whereas "Sayonara, Agamemnon" and "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass" exemplify Laurence's stance against Western tourism and development and against American systems, "A Place to Stand On" focuses on the author's own prairie roots and the settler-descendent perspective she embodies. Laurence's politics in these essays are not free from problems. As in her African work, in "Sayonara, Agamemnon," Laurence cannot exempt herself from Western development and the tourist perspective she critiques. As in some of her work towards nuclear-disarmament, in "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," Laurence calls upon Western women and mothers to help end racist and patriarchal systems. In so doing, she unwittingly invokes the history of first-wave feminism, which, as historians such as Margaret Strobel and Antoinette Burton explain, posit the white women as superior to those of the so-called Third World. Importantly, "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass" was published for a Western audience. It thus speaks to Western women and mothers, calling upon them to work towards an end to American domination. At the same time, however, Laurence does not see herself as superior to—but rather at one with—the African-American and Vietnamese mothers of whom she speaks. Hence, Laurence is quite different from the first-wave feminists whose supposed superiority helped to advance imperialist aims. As in her other work, in "A Place to Stand On," Laurence locates her own roots in a small prairie town, where, ironically, the pioneers who were Laurence's ancestors dispossessed Native peoples. Laurence occupies a problematic subject-position as a white woman who attempts to align herself with First Nations peoples despite her ancestors' history as dispossessing those very peoples. Such a subject-position, however, as we have seen, does not impede Laurence from working powerfully towards a politics of cross-cultural understanding.

Laurence's intriguing correspondence with Imperial Oil reveals how compassionate Laurence was about the land and peoples of Canada. Written during the OPEC crisis of the early 1970s, the letters between Richard Nielsen, Gordon Hinch, and Margaret Laurence demonstrate how desperate Imperial Oil was to secure a particularly Canadian image for itself. Laurence's refusal to write a television script on Canadian settlers in the name of Imperial Oil is a refusal to support a company that both exploits Canada's resources and "[drains] a substantial amount of their profits off to America" ("Interview with Bernice Lever," 25). Hinch's rhetoric, in his letter to Laurence, exposes the fiction of Imperial Oil as a company that works *for* the Canadian. His repetition of the company as the *first*, as we have seen, repeats Johnston and Lawson's theory that Canadian settlers construct for themselves an indigenous identity. Laurence's resistance to the company and her subsequent involvement in associations such as the PPAC and "Women for Peace" show her dedication—at a time when the West felt threatened by nuclear war—to return to an innocence that has been lost through the "raping" of Canada's natural resources, through technology and "progress." Laurence works toward a return to the woman and the mother, a reclosing of the broken globe. "Afraid for all our children" ("Open Letter," 160), Laurence ultimately asks that we at once come together with "mother earth" and engage in the "mothering" of it.

Conclusion

Margaret Laurence occupies an ambivalent subject position in her writing. On the one hand, she proclaims herself an anti-imperialist and a feminist. Much of her writing supports that view and shows how she fought for those beliefs in her daily life. On the other hand, her writing is necessarily caught up in imperial and patriarchal ideologies. In Africa, Laurence works to resist the violent colonial domination of African peoples. She takes up the Gold Coast's impending freedom from Britain in both her African novel and her African stories; and she is both optimistic about that freedom and wary of ongoing Western development there. In Canada, Laurence works against the predominance of British cultural traditions and the ongoing oppression of First Nations peoples. She takes up the historical and contemporary relationship between Scots-Presbyterian settlers and Métis peoples in her final Manawaka novel, *The Diviners* (1974), confronting the violent imperialist actions of the British and the Scots. Laurence's life work, as exemplified by her literature and correspondence, shows how she fought forcefully for her anti-imperialist and feminist beliefs, even as she was limited in her fight by her entanglement within Western imperial and patriarchal ideology.

In *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (1963), Laurence is acutely aware that she cannot exempt herself from imperialist and patriarchal ideologies. She admits, for example, the problem of her ambivalent subject-positioning outright (10). Laurence also shows how she is distraught precisely because she is at an impasse to which there is, seemingly, no way out. Such is the case in *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* when she meets the Somali women who ask her for medicine and the child-prostitute, Asha, whom she cannot help. In *This Side Jordan* (1960), Laurence is caught up in Western and imperial ideas of

Africa, even as she tries to resist them. She plays into the Western trope of the African landscape as feminine and maternal, and she sometimes inadvertently posits what is Western as "progressive," what is African as "traditional." At the same time, however, Laurence critiques the imperial and patriarchal ideas of Africa held by the English character in *This Side Jordan*, Johnnie Kestoe. Laurence occupies the position of a sympathetic outsider in Africa. She represents Africa and Africans within the confines of Western imperial and patriarchal discourse, even as she adamantly refutes that very discourse.

In *The Political Unconscious* (1981), Frederick Jameson argues that the novelistic genre can provide imaginary resolutions to irresolvable social issues that memoir cannot. Jameson's notion relates to Laurence's work insofar as it speaks to Laurence's account of Asha, in *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* and Ayesha, in "The Rain Child." Unlike Asha, Ayesha is rescued from her plight as child-prostitute and resides peacefully in a Ghanaian village. Haunted by her encounters with Asha and her inability to help her, Laurence creates a fictional character that is taken out of her oppressive situation. While Laurence might be limited, in her African memoir, by the conventions of the genre itself—since it has roots as a masculine genre—her fiction, at times, gives her the freedom to imagine and work toward an overcoming of imperial and patriarchal violence that result in suffering.

Laurence's African stories in *The Tomorrow-Tamer and Other Stories* (1963) take up Ghana's movement toward independence in the 1950s, and they critique ongoing Western development there during decolonization. "The Pure Diamond Man" demonstrates how colonized subjects, represented in the character of Tetteh, resist empire through appropriation, working within and yet against the Western discourses that inscribe them. In that story, Laurence challenges the idea that Africans are solely victims and do not have the agency to resist imperial domination and exploitation. "The Drummer of All the World" and "The Rain Child," unlike "The Pure Diamond Man," are narrated by Westerners in Africa. Both stories delineate the difficulty of being "a stranger in a strange land"; and, yet, they also critique the violence implicit within the colonial enterprise. In "The Drummer of All the World," Matthew's African friend, Kwabena, becomes increasingly Westernized: he decides, for example, to become a Western style doctor rather than a "ju-ju man" (15). Laurence here demonstrates how imperialism not only violates peoples and landscapes physically, but also affects the ideals and values of the colonized. Further, she challenges the notion that the West is more progressive than Africa and shows that, in 1950s Ghana, much cultural production, to use Karin Barber's words, "cannot be classified as either 'traditional' or 'elite' [...] because it straddles and dissolves these contradictions" (2). In "The Rain Child," the character of Violet Nedden, much like Laurence herself, is an anti-imperialist who sees the absurdity and the decay of the glorified imperial enterprise. Nedden, like Laurence, mocks the English empire within which she is implicated by describing her cane as an "ebony sceptre" (112), her "rattan chair" as a "throne" that is decaying—the red on it "subdued by the sun," the "gilt [...] flaking" (112). Laurence is highly critical of her own position—and the position of the English empire—as "enthroned" in a place that is not hers.

The Diviners (1974), Laurence's final and most lengthy Manawaka book, addresses the history of Scots-Presbyterian settlers and Métis peoples in Western Canada.

Laurence wrote and published the book in the early 1970s, when immigration policy in Canada was loosening, and when English Canada was just beginning to define itself as "multicultural." The novel is anti-imperialist and feminist in that it challenges Canada's subordination to Britain and women's subordination to men through the allegorical relationship between Brooke Skelton and Morag Gunn. However, the novel, like Laurence's African work, is embedded in imperialist aims. Morag breaks from Brooke, and, implicitly, Canada breaks from Britain. Yet, Laurence re-unites Morag with her childhood friend, Jules Tonnerre, a Métis, and thus re-establishes English Canada as "home" for Scots-Presbyterian peoples. Since, according to Western imperial discourse, Métis people, like Africans, are conflated with the landscape they inhabit, the uniting of Scots settler-descendents with Métis peoples is a uniting of those from the British Isles with the landscape and place of Canada. Paradoxically, then, *The Diviners* both celebrates Canada's break from Britain and re-establishes Canada as "home" for the British.

But Laurence distinguishes Scottish highlanders from the British, since the Scots were themselves colonized by "the redcoat swine" (*The Diviners,* 57). She nevertheless recognizes that the Scots contributed to the dispossession of First Nations and Métis in Canada. By positing English Canada as "home" for the Scots, *The Diviners* speaks to the fears of many English-Canadians during the 1970s, racist fears that Canada will be infiltrated by foreigners who come to the country due to its new immigration policy. Yet Laurence's impetus to bring together settler-descendents and Métis cannot be explained with reference to Canada's immigration policy alone. The novel is clearly influenced by historical events such as Canada's impending constitution, set forth by Pierre Elliott

Trudeau in 1978, and Canada's simultaneous introduction of multiculturalism, also set forth by Trudeau in the 1970s. The novel also addresses cross-cultural understanding and forces its readers to recognize how intertwined the history of settler-descendents and First Nations is. Moreover, it begins to address how peoples of different races and cultures might come to understand one another in Canada. While paying heed to ongoing and systematic racism in Canada, Laurence desires not to deny but to overcome conflict. She works against oppression and hopes, as she puts it in "Man of Our People," that "we will reach a point when it is no longer necessary to say Them and Us" (*Heart,* 166).

Laurence outlines her anti-imperialist and feminist beliefs quite explicitly in her collection of essays, *Heart of a Stranger* (1976). In "Sayonara, Agamemnon," a personal travel essay about Laurence's trip to Greece, the author critiques ongoing Western development and the tourist industry in that country. Highlighting the mobility of the Westerner and commenting on the culture of the "tour bus," Laurence demonstrates the problem that Westerners have license to gaze at the locals while the locals do not have license to "look back." Moreover, the tourist industry, Laurence suggests, constructs Greece in a romanticized way. As Laurence puts it in "Road from the Isles," another *Heart of a Stranger* essay, "The tourists are paying to be provided with an embodiment of their own fantasy. The local populace must surely sometimes want to say, 'Look, it's not that way, not at all'" (120). In this essay, Laurence challenges the ongoing imperialism that manifests itself as economic development and exploitation in foreign lands.

In "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass," Laurence argues that Canada must distinguish itself from the imperial power of America. Discussing two newspaper articles—the first of an African-American boy who has been shot, the second of a woman wiping napalm off the face of her child in Vietnam—Laurence foregrounds the violence and suffering that America's police and military systems employ. She implies that America is imperialist because it violates and dominates peoples within its own borders as well as beyond them, and she clearly counters those imperialist aims. This essay is not only anti-imperialist, but also feminist, since it calls upon women and mothers to fight against war and for peace. Such a viewpoint is one that British first-wave feminists assumed—they believed it was their duty to "mother" those from less fortunate nations. Problematically, while Laurence argues in this essay against imperialism, the position she assumes as feminist is, historically, intertwined with imperialist agendas.

In "A Place to Stand On," Laurence locates her own roots in a Canadian small prairie town and states that her writing involves remembering and returning to her past, "sometimes a more distant past which [she] has not personally experienced" (*Heart,* 6). Laurence's notion that one must return to one's past is anti-imperialist, since it counters a forgetting of Canada's violent history as a colonialist country that has dispossessed First Nations peoples. In this essay, Laurence connects the necessity to return to a Canadian past with the necessity to return to an African one. African writers, she suggests, must confront history "in order to recover a sense of themselves, an identity and a feeling of value from which they were separated by two or three generations of colonialism and missionizing" (*Heart,* 6). While paying heed to the obvious differences between African countries, many of which were occupied by English colonialists, and Canada, whose history is that of a settler-invader country, Laurence argues that, in order to counter imperialist and patriarchal agendas, Canadians and Africans alike must acknowledge and confront their violent histories.

Laurence's correspondence with Imperial Oil in 1974 not only shows how adamantly she stood for her beliefs, but also demonstrates her awareness of the dangerous and impending power of corporations and of the West's continual exploitation of lands and natural resources. Laurence resists the imperial agenda of American police and military systems in "Open Letter to the Mother of Joe Bass." In her correspondence with Imperial Oil, Laurence also resists American systems by stating that she does not want Canada's oil industry to be part of America's imperialist agenda. Unlike Jane Goodall, who participates in Gulf Oil's environmental campaign, Laurence refuses to play the role of a white woman who represents a gentler and kinder imperialism—a white woman who is, supposedly, closer to the earth and hence to the Natives that are conflated with it. While Laurence believes in the "mothering" of the earth and those that populate it, she will not play that role of earth mother in the interests of Imperial Oil.

Laurence's resistance to multi-national corporations and their exploitation of natural resources in Canada might be likened to her stance against ongoing development and exploitation in Africa. In this way, her anti-imperialist beliefs as exemplified in her correspondence with Imperial Oil are tangentially connected to her anti-imperialist beliefs in Africa. In her article, "Popular Reactions to the Petro-Naira," in *Readings in African Popular Culture* (1997), Karin Barber explains that, in Nigeria, "Fortunes are being made out of oil, but the living conditions of the rural and urban masses deteriorate as agriculture declines and the urban centres become overcrowded with the jobless and the impoverished" (91). In *The West and the Rest of Us: White Predators and the African Elite* (1987), Chinweizu explains that America's defeat in the Vietnam war and "the defeat of the West by OPEC in the battle for control of oil pricing" led to a concerted effort on the part of African leaders to "dismantle the centre-periphery structures whereby the entire Third World was yoked to the West, was plundered, and was hindered from achieving development" (510). Although Laurence does not write specifically about oil exploitation in Africa, her refusal to work for Imperial Oil is, implicitly, a refusal to work for Western imperialist aims world-wide. Her recognition of the problem of ongoing development and exploitation in Africa—even as the African countries in which she resided were undergoing decolonization—attests to her work against the global aspirations of multi-national corporations. Laurence works against the West's continual violation and control of foreign countries, and she is acutely aware that that violation does not end with decolonization.

Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel define imperialism, in *Western Women and Imperialism* (1992), as the relationship of dominance and subordination between nations. Laurence understands imperialism as such. In Africa, Laurence is particularly interested in the decolonization that is happening at the time that she resides there. But Laurence's understanding of imperialism changes during her time in Africa: she initially understands it simply as the English colonialist occupation and exploitation of Africa; subsequently, she understands it as inclusive of ongoing Western economic development there. For example, in *The Prophet's Camel Bell,* Laurence does not, at first, see the construction of the *ballehs* and her presence in Somaliland as imperialist. She comes to realize, however, that the Somali people "were by no means convinced that the project [of constructing the *ballehs*] was designed to help them" (44). Laurence not only understands imperialism as the relationship of domination and subordination between nations, but also as the relationship of domination and subordination within nations. This is clearly the case with the history of the Scots-Presbyterian settlers and the Métis in Western Canada, a history that Laurence takes up in *The Diviners* (1974). Laurence understands Britain's historical and cultural domination over Canada as imperialist, and she desires a break from Britain. She also understands British and Scots settlers' historical and ongoing domination of First Nations and Métis as imperialist, and she works against this kind of imperialism. Laurence's essays in *Heart of a Stranger* suggest that she is opposed to Western domination and exploitation of countries through tourism and that she is opposed to the domination of American police and military systems within and beyond their own borders. Such political stances can also be perceived as anti-imperialist. In all cases, Laurence resists white Westerners' violence against Others. Imperialism, then, as understood by Laurence and in this study, does not only involve historical relationships between countries, but is also concerned—in a broader sense—with domination and exploitation of lands and peoples in various historical and contemporary locations.

Just as Laurence understands and works against the violent and literal domination of Western peoples over Others, so, too, she understands and works against powerful and insidious Western *representations* of Others. In *This Side Jordan* (1960) and "The Drummer of All the World" (1963), for instance, Laurence employs and critiques the trope of land as woman in the characters of Emerald and Afua respectively. Likewise, in *This Side Jordan,* Laurence works within the trope that defines Africans as ancient and traditional. At the same time, however, she counters that trope by suggesting that the African drums—much to Johnnie Kestoe's dismay—are persistent in their threat to disrupt what is Western and modern. Laurence is aware that the discourses of imperialism and patriarchy are often inseparable. Johnnie's possession of the African woman, Emerald, in *This Side Jordan,* is also, allegorically, the English colonizer's possession of Africa. In the same way, Brooke's possession of Morag, in *The Diviners*, is also England's possession—symbolically and culturally—of Canada. The intertwinement of the discourses of imperialism and patriarchy is epitomized in Haggard's map, which, as McClintock points out, is both a treasure map and a diagram of a female body (3). Although Laurence does not specifically contest the intertwinement of these two discourses, she does counter both the possession of the colonized by the colonizers and the possession of women by man. Her anti-imperialism and her feminism are each a part of the other.

Laurence's feminist beliefs were influenced by the history of first-wave feminism in both Britain and Canada. In Britain, first-wave feminism was, problematically, at one with imperialism: British feminists during colonialism considered themselves superior to the Indian and African woman. In Canada, first-wave feminists fought for the vote for women at the expense of ethnic minorities and First Nations. Laurence directly states that she was influenced by two of Canada's most famous first-wave feminists, Nellie McClung and Emily Murphy. "Only in my young adulthood," Laurence asserts, "did I realize how far-reaching was the victory of such women as Nellie McClung and Emily Murphy, to have women recognized as persons. They won in 1929" ("Books That Matter to Me," 24). If Laurence proclaims herself to have been influenced by Canadian first-wave feminists, then she is, by implication, part of both nationalist and imperialist aims. In *The Diviners*, she exemplifies a nationalist stance by bringing together the histories of English-speaking settlers and First Nations and by positing those histories as each a part of the other. Laurence's stance in her correspondence with Imperial Oil might also be called nationalist, since she exclaims that she is against multi-national corporations that exploit Canada's natural resources and drain Canada's wealth to America. But Laurence's work quite powerfully shows her countering of nationalism and imperialism. *The Diviners* not only seeks to bring together a multicultural English Canada, but also confronts and critiques Canada's violent history as a settler-invader country. Furthermore, Laurence's correspondence with Imperial Oil shows how powerful a Canadian literary icon can be in resisting the unethical and far-reaching work of a multi-national corporation deemed Canadian.

While some critics have taken up Laurence's political stance, no one has engaged in a full-length study that examines both her African and her Canadian work in relation to such politics. This study has demonstrated not only how Laurence works within and against imperial and patriarchal ideologies in her African writing, but also how she works within and against such ideologies in Canada. It delineates how Laurence is anti-imperialist in her work against British cultural domination in Canada, but also how she is nationalist in her positing of an English Canada that is unified in its very diversity. Laurence understood imperialism as the domination of Western peoples over Others, and she works toward decolonization in Ghana in her writing. She also begins to understand imperialism as the domination of Western peoples over Others within nations, and she works against such domination with regard to First Nations peoples in Canada. Her writing must be contextualized within the cultural and historical milieu within which it is embedded. Thus, Britain's withdrawal from Ghana, at the time that Laurence was writing about that country, is highly significant to her outlook on Britain's imperialist and patriarchal aims. Likewise, Canada's movement toward multiculturalism in the early 1970s, and its loosening of immigration policy at that time, is highly relevant to Laurence's Canadian writing. Ultimately, Laurence seeks to go beyond the boundaries and limitations that cause Westerners and English-Canadians to view "us" in relation to "them." As a kind of "Drummer of All the World"—one who "drums" or summons a message to the readers of her works—Laurence asks peoples to pay heed to one another's difference and yet to come together in mutual understanding, respect, and reciprocity.

Endnotes

Introduction

1. As I explain in chapter three of this dissertation, Kwame Nkrumah became the main exponent of Pan-Africanism in the 1950s and 60s, when Laurence was living in the Gold Coast. Nkrumah wanted to secure a strong voice for Africans in the Gold Coast, and he eventually formed the Gold Coast Convention People's Party, became Ghana's first Prime Minister, and lead the Gold Coast to independence in 1957.

Chapter One

2. In *Prospero and Caliban: the Psychology of Colonization* (1964), O. Mannoni argues that those Westerners who become involved in the colonial project have a desire or need for people to be dependent on them. Mannoni's argument was novel because it was the first to suggest that the colonizer, rather than the colonized, was psychologically abnormal. In *Black Skin, White Masks* (1968), Franz Fanon argues that it is not only individual colonizers who can be blamed for colonization, but Western culture and the colonial system itself.

3. Laurence refers to and counters Richard Burton's *First Footsteps in East Africa* (1856) throughout her African memoir: "We were going to the same country where Sir Richard Burton had gone so long before, when he believed his footsteps were the first that really counted for anything in East Africa" (*Prophets,* 12).

4. Various theorists have shown how the West represents nature as feminine. In *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* (1990), for example, Carolyn Merchant demonstrates the various ways in which nature is coded as explicitly female.

5. It is noteworthy that Senghor revised his views on negritude before his death in 2001.

6. In both East and West Africa, colonization proper did not occur until 1885.

7. The ongoing imperialist practices of English-Canada are exemplified by the British Columbia Treaty Referendum of 2003, to provide just one example. The government used the referendum as a way to gain public support for the continuation of imperialist practices toward indigenous peoples. As Murray Browne, lawyer and land-use planner who works with the B.C. Treaty Commission explains, "The provincial government refuses to negotiate meaningful self-government, insists on gaining new jurisdiction over First Nation lands, refuses to return more than 2% of each First Nation's land that was wrongly taken in the past, and insists that the Province should get free minerals and access to other benefits from the 2% of land that they are proposing to return to First Nations" (http://arcbc.tripod.com/questions.htm).

8. I use the masculine pronoun here intentionally, for Lacan's theory is one of masculine subject formation.

Chapter Two

9. During the 1960s and 1970s, soon after Laurence wrote *This Side Jordan*, a debate among African scholars regarding African literature began. The debate centred around whether or not African literature could be produced by non-Africans, and more specifically, whether or not African literature could be produced in non-African languages. The debate, it might be argued, began with Obi Wali's essay entitled "The Dead End of African Literature?," which was presented in 1962 at the Makarere conference of African writers and published in 1963 in *Transition*. According to Wali's assertion, Laurence's *This Side Jordan* could not be called an "African novel," for as Joe E. Obi puts it in "Literature and the Social Functions of Language: Critical notes on an African Debate" (1996), "Literature is a manifestation of its *producers'* culture (23, my emphasis). My use of the term "African novel" to describe Laurence's text is not meant to imply that the text is African. I do not agree with Wali's assertion that African texts should not be produced in non-African languages, since the production of African texts in non-African languages enables those texts to reach non-African audiences. However, I would agree that Laurence's novel is a manifestation of her own, rather than an African, culture. The term "African novel," as I employ it, is meant to describe a text that takes Africa as its subject, but does not present Africa from the perspective of Africans themselves.

10. Wendy Roy makes a similar argument in her article, "Anti-imperialism and Feminism in Margaret Laurence's African Writings" (2001). However, Roy believes, ultimately, that Laurence's anti-imperialism and feminism can be reconciled. I argue that Laurence's work always remains troubled by the inability for the two to come together.

11. The term "memsahib" is a title for English colonial wives by Indian, and, subsequently, African, peoples. Laurence rejects the term on two counts: first, because it implies that she is a colonialist, by virtue of her Anglo-heritage and her marriage to a white man; and second, because it foregrounds her role as a wife, rather than as an independent woman. The term, however, was used to describe white married women in the colonies, and as such, Laurence could not ultimately refuse it.

12. In her other writings, Laurence quite explicitly states her contempt for certain English imperialists as she simultaneously admits her association with some of them. In a letter dated 31 July 1962 to her American publishing agent, Willis Wing, for example, she states that she will edit parts of the book that discuss the "kind of English [she] expected to find" in Africa (read: the ones she dislikes); in the same letter, she says that she will "go on to deal with the kind of English I did not expect to find" (read: the ones whom she likes and with whom she associates).

13. As I mention earlier, Laurence acknowledges that customs like this one, which are applicable to "European women," are also applicable to white North American women such as herself.

14. "Illaloes," Laurence explains, were "'bush police,' tribesmen to whom the government gave uniforms and rifles and a certain amount of training" (*Prophet's,* 72).

15. It is particularly noteworthy that the description of Africa as a woman and more specifically as a prostitute occurs in other white women's writings about Africa. In her autobiographical work, *West With the Night*, for instance, the white Kenyan writer, Beryl Markham, describes a brothel keeper in terms of Western tropes of Africa. Moreover, the language in Laurence's and Markham's descriptions of the women is extraordinarily similar: Emerald and Johnnie have "no language in common" (233), just as Markham's African woman speaks a language Markham has "never heard" (267); and Emerald's face is blank and expressionless in the same way that Markham's brothel keeper's face is unreadable: it "held the lineage of several races, none of which had given it distinction" (267).

Chapter Three

16. As I explain in chapter one, "racialism," according to Anthony Kwame Appiah in *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture* (1992), is the idea that a race possesses inherited characteristics that are specific to that race (6). That doctrine is a Western concept based on rising scientific and Enlightenment theories and Darwinian methods of classification.

17. Laurence's technique in this instance is one in which she juxtaposes the official, yet fabricated, story that Tetteh relays with the one in which he speaks to his family in their own language. While the story he gives Hardacre is full of mystery and tradition, the discussion with his family is more practical. This technique is repeated in Laurence's

Manawaka novel *The Fire-Dwellers.* In one scene of that novel, Laurence juxtaposes a television newscast of world events with Stacey's conversation of everyday things with her children. In both instances, Laurence seems to challenge so-called official public events, the fabrication of what is real with the everyday reality itself.

18. In "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality," Freud speaks of the fetish as an object that is "substituted for the sexual object," and he states that "Such substitutes are with some justice likened to the fetishes in which savages believe that their gods are embodied" (249). For Freud, the fetish is that which involves a delusion, since, in his theory, the young boy upholds his belief that his mother has a penis so that "the mutilated woman can be restored to imaginary wholeness" (McClintock 190).

19. Laurence also critiques anthropology in other works. In her short story entitled "Mask of Beaten Gold," for instance—an African story that was not published in *The Tomorrow-Tamer* collection—the boy-protagonist's father makes the following statement when his son comments on a photograph of the death mask of King Kofi Kakari, a photograph he views in a book anthropology: "It's made of beaten gold. Unfortunately, it's in London now. Pinched after one of the Ashanti wars" (12). In this instance, Laurence clearly comments on the economic exploitation of Africa as well as the problem of English anthropologists "pinching" such items for their own gain.

20. As I explain in the previous chapter, "Africanization" took place when Ghana became independent. Essentially, it was a policy by which British employees of the colonial government were replaced by African ones.

21. As I note in chapter one of this dissertation, African feminists such as Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyeme strategically uses the term "womanism" instead of feminism. African "womanists," unlike Western feminists, Ogunyeme asserts, are as attentive to issues of race as they are to issues of gender.

Chapter Four

22. As is evidenced from her strong responses to the banning of *The Diviners* in some Ontario schools, Laurence quite adamantly fought for the study of Canadian curricula in the Canadian education system. She sought to replace British content with Canadian content in the school system. Regarding the banning of *The Diviners* from the schools, Laurence states, in a letter to Adele Wisemen, that if the school Trustee James Telford wins out, she will have to "make a personal statement" (*Selected Letters,* 351). Implying that the implementation of Canadian literature in schools is at stake, she states that "It goes far beyond the question of my book and [Alice Munro's]" (*Selected Letters,* 351).

23. Rupert Brooke was born on August 3rd, 1887, and died on April 23rd, 1915. He was an English poet who died early in WWI. John Skelton was a London poet who was born in 1460 and died on June 21st, 1529. He was a "Tudor poet and satirist of both political and religious subjects" (*Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature*, 176, 1039).

24. Archibald McDonald was born in Scotland and came to Red River in 1813. He became deputy governor of the Red River Settlement, and, after the Red River rebellion, he worked for the Hudson Bay Company and came to be chief in charge of Fort Langley (Woodcock *Gabriel Dumont,* 53).

25. Prin says to Morag, "That Colin, [...] He never done that for my Christie. Saved him, like. Or maybe he done it. I dunno. He was a boy, just a boy, and that scared. Poor lamb" (224).

Chapter Five

26. I would like to acknowledge two of Nora Foster Stovel's papers, both of which inspired ideas for this section of my dissertation: "The Face of Africa: Laurence's Portraits of Self and Other," and "Heart of a Traveler: Margaret Laurence's Life Journey."

27. In a subsequent letter to Marian Engel about her "row with Rudy Wiebe," Laurence explains that Rudy Wiebe said he was misquoted in the *MacLean's* article and that Laurence believes him. Asserting her feminist beliefs, Laurence also makes the following statement: "I suppose in my letter I attacked him when I should have reassured him, but Marian, I did not do it in public print, and how long must women reassure and not protest when we ourselves are ostensibly attacked?"

28. In *National Oil Companies*, Leslie E. Grayson also points to the shift in control of oil. Published in 1981, Grayson's study states that in 1970, "about 70 per cent of the world's oil trade was handled by the oil multinationals […]. A decade later, the multinationals' share has declined to about 50 per cent" (1). The trade has shifted, Grayson argues, "to markets served by the national oil companies of the producing and consuming countries" (1).

29. Laurence was aware of the impending publication of this book through her involvement with and financial support for the Public Petroleum Association of Canada (PPAC). Laurence includes "PPAC Report #3" in her papers at York University Archives. This report is written by James Laxer and Anne Martin on 10 August 1976, and it announces the publication of the book. Laurence most likely read the book upon its release in 1976.

30. In *Subject to Colonialism* (2001), Gaurav Desai explains how the written word comes to be valued as "truth" in opposition to oral storytelling and history. He explains that in many instances of Western scholarly work regarding Africa, indigenous knowledge is regarded as supplementary. He also explains how certain institutions "authorize some people as opposed to others" and "legitimate certain *kinds* of discourses as opposed to others" (119).

31. Letters to and from the PPAC abound in the Margaret Laurence Papers at York University Library Archives. They begin in 1976 and continue well into the 1980s. A letter dated 4 January 1978 from Anne Martin of the PPAC to Laurence thanks her for her "financial contribution to the PPAC."

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